UNE 22, 1992 49145 $2.95 Vol. 44 No. 12

Murphy's Law in the White House

NATIONAL REVIEW

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POOR?
HUDDLED?
TEMPEST-TOSSED?

Try Australia

Rethinking Immigration

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our cat
our house
me
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new baby

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in hospital costs.

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NATIONAL REVIEW

JUNE 22, 1992 VOL. XLIV, NO. 12

Cover Story

30 ***Time to Rethink Immigration?***
In the first of an occasional series on issues that inflame and divide conservatives, **Peter Brimelow** reopens the immigration debate. (Responses will appear in a later issue.) Americans have come to feel that discussion of immigration is futile at best, and possibly un-American—we are a nation of immigrants, are we not? But immigration is not an irresistible natural force, it is a matter of public policy, and public policies can be changed. Among the questions that should shape the debate: Is immigration really necessary to the economy? Is the U.S. still culturally capable of absorbing immigrants? Is immigration—Mr. Bush, are you listening?—really good for the Republicans?

Articles

21 ***On the Scene***
When Dan Quayle stirred up the *Murphy Brown* hornets' nest, the President and his crew could only retreat while the iron was hot. What else, asks **James Bowman**, should we expect the nice men to do? . . . What should the free countries of Eastern Europe do with their KGB-tainted intelligence services? At a congress of spies from West and East, **Massimo Calabresi** finds that reform is easy to discuss, but expensive to achieve. . . . The media put a national spotlight on the story of Virginia's execution of convicted murderer Roger Keith Coleman—on one side of the story, that is; **Thomas Harvey Holt** analyzes the Fourth Estate's new role in the justice system. . . . Like much of Southeast Asia, Indonesia has grown fat under authoritarian capitalism and American-led stability; **Robert Elegant** wonders what will happen when Uncle Sam pulls out.

Cover illustration: Robert Wisnewski

Books, Arts & Manners

47 Roger Rosenblatt's thoughtful, moderate solution to the abortion debate is neither, says **Hadley Arkes**. . . . William McGurn's careful reporting unmasks Britain's ignoble evasion of her duty to Hong Kong, persuading **Robert Elegant** that she is indeed "Perfidious Albion." . . . The hole in *The Idea of the University*, **Thomas Short** notes, is that would-be reformer Jaroslav Pelikan only wants to preserve his own privileges. . . . **Florence King** shows how, to establish Eleanor Roosevelt as the model for modern major feminists, Blanche Wiesen Cook first had to rescue her from the facts. . . . Joan Didion still has just about the best eyes around, but **David Klinghoffer** finds that she no longer uses her legs. . . . *Brightness Falls* convinces **Richard Brookhiser** that daring young Jay McInerney is, yes, a moralist. . . . At Gerald Ranck's spellbinding performance of the first fifty Scarlatti sonatas, **Wm. F. Buckley Jr.** notes the conspicuous abscence of the culture lords. . . . After a rigorous sampling of Southern seafood, **Digby Anderson** sees but one solution: immigration.

64 ***The Gimlet Eye***
When **D. Keith Mano** decides to be a racist, it's a matter of life and death.

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The Audit Bureau

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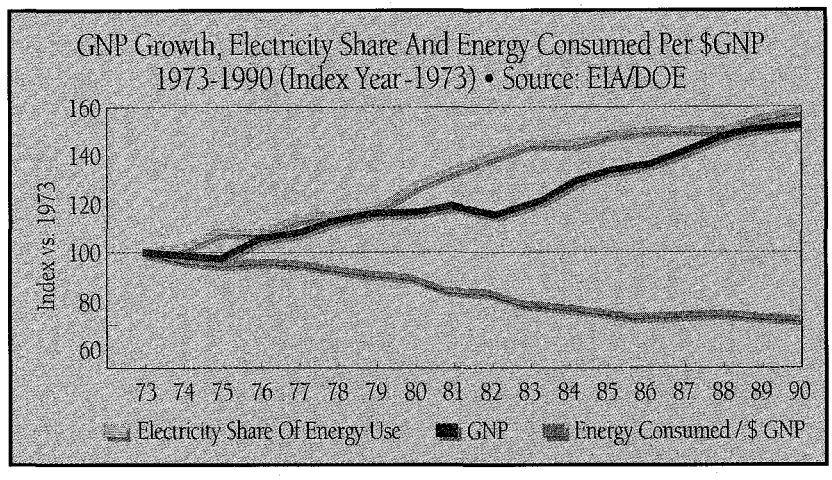
GNP Growth, Electricity Share And Energy Consumed Per $GNP
1973-1990 (Index Year-1973) • Source: EIA/DOE
Index vs. 1973
160
140
120
100
80
60
73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90
Electricity Share Of Energy Use
GNP
Energy Consumed / $ GNP

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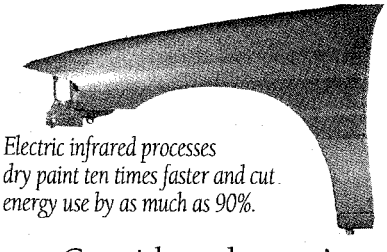

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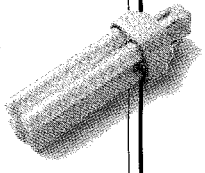

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LETTERS

For the Record

I'm disappointed. I never would have believed that NATIONAL REVIEW would be guilty of such distortion, bias, and misreporting ["Throwing Stones," by William McGurn, May 11]. Clearly my arguments must have merit since you are desperate to impugn my motives and my character as a way of defeating my cause.

Let me set the record straight:

1. The conversation that Mr. McGurn alleges took place with Tony Zagotta about his use or non-use of the "pro-life issue" for College Republican fund-raising never took place to the best of my recollection or the recollection of those who were with me at that party.

2. The *Washington Post* article *did not* have damning quotations about my character. Read it again. In fact they refuted any of those questions that had been raised in the *Legal Times* article. They felt those charges were unfounded.

3. On the accusation that I "play different tunes to different audiences"—while the order in which I present my arguments may differ with audiences, the message is the same: The Republican Party has always stood for less government, not government meddling in our lives or making private and personal decisions for us.

4. Mr. McGurn says that I appeared at a Wichita rally to *endorse* Dr. Tiller, famous for performing late-term abortions. I did not appear there to endorse him, but to represent pro-choice Republicans.

5. Mr. McGurn attacks my assertion that I had a conversation with Lee Atwater that led me to start Republicans for Choice. If Sally Atwater doesn't remember, why didn't he ask the only other person who took part in that conversation—my *ex*-husband, Roger Stone. He will confirm that the conversation took place.

Never have I said that Lee Atwater *directed* me to start Republicans for Choice—rather Lee pointed out that it would only be through my leadership, or that of someone connected to the conservative wing, that the party would ever reverse its pro-life stand.

6. As for the snipes about the money my group has given to candidates—it has never been our *primary* stated goal to recruit and elect candidates, but our record has been excellent for a *new* PAC. To back that up, consider the following:

The National Abortion Rights Action League, founded in 1972, gave 27 per cent of its money to candidates in 1991; Voters for Choice, founded in 1979, 11 per cent; Pro-Choice America, founded in 1990, 0 per cent; GOPAC (pro-life), founded in 1979, 4 per cent; and RFC, founded in 1990, 6.7 per cent.

7. Mr. McGurn says I refused to give figures on how much money RFC has spent on the platform fight. He never asked: we have spent over $350,000.

8. He foolishly argues that in order to maximize the net raised for programs we should not use direct mail alone, but rather solicit funds from foundations.

That is illegal! *PACs cannot solicit funds from foundations—it's illegal.*

Direct mail does more than just raise money—Bill Buckley knows that. Direct mail locates and mobilizes those who support you and in our case is helping us build a Republican pro-choice movement.

9. Mr. McGurn charges that "If a direct-mail piece loses money for the client, the vendor may still make money." According to federal law, any of my companies that may do work for RFC must be paid to the best of RFC's ability, *or we will be prosecuted for making a corporate contribution.* The FEC has audited us *to make sure* RFC wasn't withholding payments to my companies. At all times we've handled ourselves with the utmost integrity and decorum. I resent the allegations to the contrary.

10. I am not head of Republicans for Choice to encourage abortion—I am fighting for the woman's right to make the decision. There is a difference. I am a conservative Republican who feels legislation is not the answer to reducing the incidence of abortion. The Republican Party can be the party of fewer abortions by promoting moral leadership, personal responsibility, and advancing the teaching of abstinence side by side with the teaching of safe sex.

I respect Mr. McGurn's right to hold a differing view. I do not seek to impugn his motives for holding that view, but I can't help but wonder what his motives are for attacking my character.

If Mr. McGurn's argument about abortion is truly strong, then NATIONAL REVIEW should not have to sink to the kind of *National Enquirer* innuendo and misstatement featured in this article.

Ann Stone
Washington, D.C.

Dear me, where to begin. Mrs. Stone's letter puts me in mind of the Jesuit who, accused of murdering ten men and a dog, triumphantly produces the dog at the trial. Let me concede point 8 on a technicality: I was wrong to have suggested soliciting money for Republicans for Choice from foundations. This was an error introduced when we were cutting the piece down, and it does make me feel silly. I feel silly because the point I was trying to make still holds: that if Ann Stone really were serious about raising the $1.5 to $3 million she claimed she was going to raise when she started up Republicans for Choice, she'd be doing more than just direct mail—she'd be out there soliciting funds, full-time, from big money donors. On the other hand, if one had a substantial business interest in direct-mail, of course, there might be much less interest in pursuing other avenues of raising money. The rest of the letter has Mrs. Stone vigorously defending herself against charges I never made. In point 9, for example, I specifically noted that there was nothing illegal, and I am well acquainted with federal law on the subject. But this still evades the crucial point, to wit, that choosing *her own businesses leaves her with strong incentives not necessarily the same as the PAC's. Ditto with the figures in point 7: I wasn't after how much money she'd spent, I asked* how many delegates *she had. Mrs. Stone declined to give a figure, saying she was "not about to reveal our strategy to* NATIONAL REVIEW." *And we can quibble over the word "endorse" in point 4. But she did appear with late-term abortionist Dr. Tiller in Wichita, where she did refer to him as a "great man," and Webster's Ninth rather comes down on my side here (***endorse***: "to express approval of publicly and definitely").*

Let me address the two things that bothered her most: her querying Tony Zagotta about using the pro-life issue and her claim that Lee Atwater was the impetus for starting up Republicans for Choice. With regard to the former, Mr. Zagotta stands by his account, and you can't produce witnesses to say a conversation never took place. Vis-à-vis Lee Atwater, the shoe is on the other foot: there is no way for me to produce people to verify that this *conversation did not happen the way she says. But I never said that. I lim-*

(Continues on page 61)

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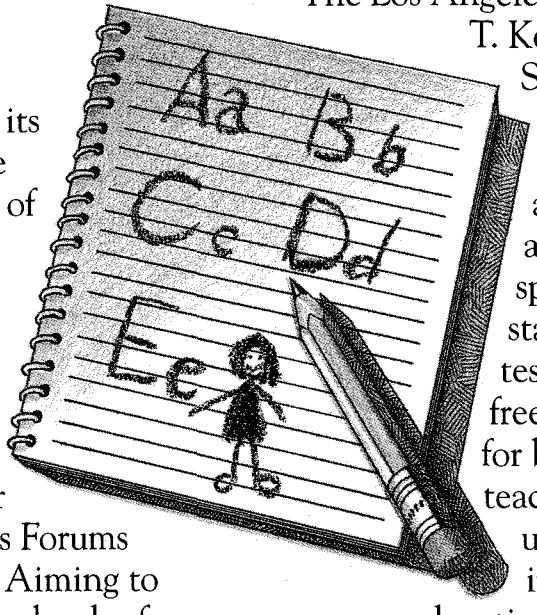
Rethinking Public Education in America

When it comes to explaining the lack of improvement in academic achievement among American children, most people are all too eager to blame the nation's school system. Yet few can agree how best to reshape U.S. elementary and secondary schools to meet the educational challenges of the 1990s.

As a company with a major presence in this country and interest in its well-being, we share the concern about the state of U.S. education.

That's why Hitachi recently joined forces with the California Chamber of Commerce and other civic-minded organizations to sponsor California Public Affairs Forums on educational reform. Aiming to develop a consensus on school reform, we invited several hundred educators, business executives, government officials, parents, and journalists from the San Francisco area to hear experts discuss their ideas on educational reform. Two days later in Los Angeles a similar audience heard another prestigious panel address the same topic.



Each forum featured a leading proponent of educational reform as its keynote speaker. In San Francisco, it was William J. Bennett, formerly U.S. Secretary of Education and now a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute. The Los Angeles forum featured David T. Kearns, Deputy U.S. Secretary of Education.

Among the proposed reforms: year-around school attendance; more specialized schools; standardized achievement tests and curricula; and freedom of school choice for both parents and teachers. The speakers also urged greater business involvement in public education.

It's our hope that these ideas will contribute to a growing consensus on educational reform in the U.S.

To obtain copies of the speakers' presentations and other information, write: Hitachi, P.O. Box 35146, Los Angeles, CA 90035.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Flying Visit

SEOUL, TAIPEI, HONG KONG

■ "I have seen the future—and it works," said Lincoln Steffens famously, after a visit to the fledgling Soviet Union. Steffens was wrong, of course, but he can be forgiven for a false prediction about an apparently new and original political system. It is harder to forgive later visitors like J. K. Galbraith, who, right up to the Soviet collapse, continued to see glittering achievements, oblivious to the squalor and tyranny all around them. Not for nothing does the Russian proverb say: "No one lies like an eyewitness." Still, having just followed Bill Buckley around the Far East on a National Review Institute tour, I feel reasonably confident in applying Steffens's words to the Asian capitalism that is lifting people out of poverty into a standard of living comparable to that of Europe twenty years ago.

But why call it the future when its achievements are already palpable? Hong Kong has a per-capita income equal to some European countries today. Taiwan has the highest national reserves in the world—about $82 billion. And South Korea suffers badly from that disease of prosperity: the traffic jam. When we arrived at a meeting half an hour later than our South Korean hosts after inching through the Seoul traffic, I was reminded of a remark by a former British Minister of Transport. He used to say that he was the only man in London who had to apologize to his guests when they were late for dinner.

■ The deeper reason for not employing the term "future" is that Asian capitalism is deeply traditional. It is, in effect, a marriage between Adam Smith and Confucius: market economics against a background of family cohesion, the work ethic, and social order.

Of course there are considerable differences among the "Four Tigers" of Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan. We shall be exploring these in subsequent issues. My own tentative conclusion is that the less *dirigiste* models of Hong Kong and Taiwan will have the edge over the more authoritarian Singapore and South Korean models. But none of them is socialist on any definition.

And all of them are moving toward democracy. President Roh Tae Woo in South Korea will step down next year, and a fiercely contested three-way election among a government candidate, opposition leader, and Ross Perot–like independent will then take place. In Taiwan, the technically illegal opposition party sits in the legislature (and held a reception in our hotel). And there is pressure in Hong Kong to entrench a fuller democracy before Britain hands over control to China in 1997.

Milton Friedman has argued that capitalism was a necessary condition for democracy. That is certainly true. But the experience of Asia suggests also that capitalism generates a middle class that, having had a share of economic power, inevitably wants a share of political power as well.

■ If Asian capitalism looks like the future, American and European capitalism suddenly looks like the past. When Asians observe America on television, what they see is a collapsing educational system, runaway government spending, riots in the streets, and a weakening family structure. They are shocked by this, but also immensely curious as to what will be done to cure such ills. Virtually everyone asked us about Ross Perot.

But there is no tendency to gloat. Quite the reverse. Asians know that their present prosperity would never have been created if the U.S. had not provided both security and free trade. They feel that a weaker America will be isolationist and protectionist—and that they will be forced to live in a continent dominated by rivalry between a nuclear China and a nuclear Japan. And they don't think that future would work. —JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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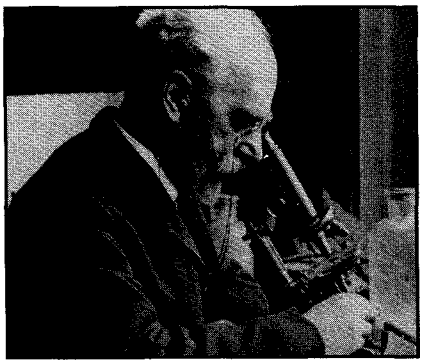

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FOR THE RECORD

■ The day after California, New Jersey, and Ohio primaries, the headlines gave **Ross Perot** equal billing with **George Bush**, **Bill Clinton**. Media had been buzzing about possible Perot running-mates, with **Jeane Kirkpatrick**, Vietnam War hero Adm. **James Stockdale**, and even **Frank Perdue** among those mentioned. . . . If Perot makes it as a true third candidate, the choice would be almost certainly forced into the House: the *next* House, the one elected in November—giving added spice to races already made interesting by redistricting and by fallout from House banking scandal. In reconfigured Illinois 16th CD, conservative lawyer **Don Muzzullo** is given a good chance to bounce liberal incumbent **John Cox**. . . . In Texas 12th CD (home to Ross Perot's airport), Republican **David Hobbs**, who runs Rep. **Dick Armey**'s Institute for Policy Innovation, hopes to dethrone **Jim Wright**'s successor, **Pete Geren**. . . . All four House Democratic leaders are watching their backs. Some ten challengers (in both parties) are vying to take on Majority Leader **Dick Gephardt** (Mo.), who had a low victory margin in his 1990 re-election. . . . Speaker **Tom Foley** (Wash.), floundering on Capitol Hill, will face State Rep. **Dwayne Sommers**, a solid conservative. . . . In Prince George's County, Maryland, young Republican **Larry Hogan Jr.** is out to topple liberal Democratic Caucus chairman **Steny Hoyer** in a redrawn district. Hogan is assaulting Hoyer's check-bouncing record (Hoyer's daughter, incidentally, was employed at House Bank), as well as promoting a broad anti-tax platform. . . . Democratic Whip **David Bonior** (Mich.) faces rematch with State Sen. **Doug Carl**, who almost beat him in 1988.

■ It was L.A. riots that gave Perot his biggest boost in the media. According to *Media Monitor*, TV networks ran 14 Perot stories in the month before the riots, 34 in the three weeks after the riots. In contrast, Bill Clinton got 28 stories in the three weeks after the riots, George Bush 39. . . . Riots made a Greek chorus of **Pat Buchanan**. Instead of more social programs, he said, "what we need is reconversion of the American people." The rioters "came out of schools where God, the Ten Commandments, and moral instruction have been expelled, and sex education, values clarification, and condoms have been put in." . . . Rep. **Clyde Holloway** (R., La.) hotly opposes the District of Columbia City Council's sexual initiatives: a plan to distribute condoms to children of disapproving parents, and a "domestic-partners law," which mandates that homosexual and unmarried heterosexual lovers will get the same health-care benefits as married couples. Holloway warns that a society "ignores the value system" only at "staggering cost." . . . Sen. **Charles Robb** (D., Va.) is being investigated by federal grand jury on charges of wiretapping Democratic Party rival, Gov. **Douglas Wilder**. Three Robb aides have already pleaded guilty. Senatorial courtesy: **John Warner** (R., Va.) derailed attempt at Virginia GOP convention to pass a resolution demanding Robb's resignation. . . . Delegates were gathering in Rio for the Earth Summit just as an astounding scandal broke around Brazilian President **Fernando Collor**, which featured accusations of corruption, extortion, and cocaine abuse made by his own brother in a videotaped interview with a leading news magazine, *Veja*.

© Scully, *Punch* / Rothco

"Live within our means! My God, don't say it's come to that."

■ Media stars who complain about America's "decade of greed" came in for unwelcome attention at CBS annual meeting. After Chairman **Laurence Tisch** announced (to guffaws) that "there is no greed in the news business," **Murray Baron**, president of Accuracy in Media, suggested **Dan Rather**'s next set of contract negotiations be videotaped for prime time. Rather's contracts for the 1980s are said to total $35 million. And **Don Hewitt**, producer of *60 Minutes*, is reportedly paid $3 million a year. . . . **Pat Robertson**, founder of Christian Broadcasting Network, has been approved by federal bankruptcy judge **Francis Conrad** to purchase moribund UPI wire service. Said **Stephen Isaacs**, associate dean of Columbia School of Journalism: "It's going to take God to make UPI profitable."

■ What are the chances of women increasing their representation in Congress? **R. W. Apple Jr.** in the *New York Times* says there may be five women in new Senate (there are two now) and an increase of women in the House from 29 to 49. In California, **Dianne Feinstein** and **Barbara Boxer** handily won Democratic Senate nominations. . . . Apple claims women have surged into politics because of "disgust" at all-male Senate Judiciary Committee's hearings on **Clarence Thomas**: "**Anita F. Hill** is their **Joan of Arc**." Women's resentment over hearings was alleged to be responsible for Democrat **Lynn Yeakel**'s upset victory in Pennsylvania Senate primary. But a *USA Today* survey shows that more women (45 per cent) believed Clarence Thomas than Anita Hill (26 per cent); and that 55 per cent of women wanted Thomas confirmed while 29 per cent did not. . . . **Peggy Noonan**, coiner of "kinder, gentler nation," "a thousand points of light," and "read my lips," will not join Bush campaign as a full-time speechwriter, *Newsweek* reports. However, she will advise on "strategy and policy."

■ *Parade* reports that Sen. **Robert Byrd** (D., W.Va.)—named "King of Pork" by Citizens against Government Waste—will be honored by statue in Beckley, W.Va., depicting him with outstretched hand.

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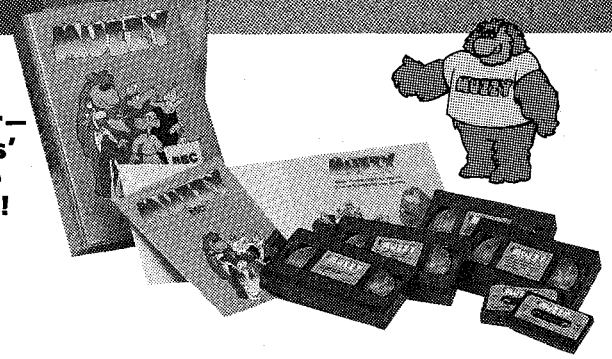

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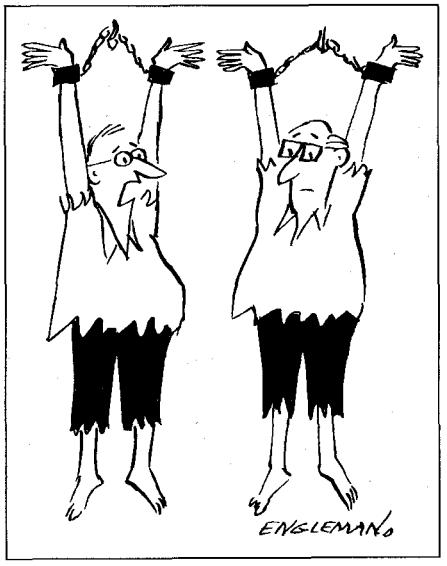
THE WEEK

■ Ross Perot won't hire gays and adulterers for his Administration. At last—a practical plan to shrink the size of government.

■ The California primary put paid to the common wisdom that Reagan conservatism was dead in the California GOP. Former Los Angeles TV commentator Bruce Herschensohn handily won the GOP nomination for the Senate seat being vacated by Alan Cranston. Unlike weather-vane moderate John Seymour, appointed to the state's other Senate seat by accommodationist Governor Pete Wilson, Herschensohn is a politician of conviction. An unyielding advocate of small government, low taxes, and a strong defense, he became the voice of Southern California conservatism during his decade on television. In the primary, he bested a far-better-funded opponent, Representative Tom Campbell of Palo Alto, who is the most liberal member of the state's GOP congressional delegation, even if he does call himself a "New Conservative." (Sonny Bono came in a distant third.) Ironically, NOW and NARAL may have given Herschensohn a boost. By pouring big dollars into (unsuccessful) primary challenges to a couple of hard-right GOP officeholders in Orange County, including Representative Bob Dornan, feminist groups ensured a large turnout—of conservatives, roused by a threat to their guys. On primary day, Democratic voters also proved obliging, tapping Bay Area Representative Barbara Boxer as their candidate for the Cranston seat. There isn't a better example still extant of Sixties left-liberalism than Representative Boxer—*and* she kited 143 checks.

■ Secretary Dick Cheney has been the victim of a series of mischievous leaks of his "Defense Planning Guidance," an internal strategy document whose successive drafts seem doomed to wind up in the *New York Times*. The *Times* found the earlier draft shocking because of its unashamed assertion of the benefits to the world of American military pre-eminence (see "Brave New World," *NR*, March 30). The *Times* has now stolen a later draft, which it finds much better, thank you, and claims credit for forcing the improvements. In truth, the *Times* is pulling a fast one. Aside from minor cosmetic changes to humor allies, the defense posture of the United States under Cheney remains as strong as before. America's leadership of its alliances and willingness to face down threats to the free world are still the main themes of the document. If the *Times* were really endorsing such an expansive defense policy, now *that* would be good news fit to print.



"The voters sure don't treat us congressmen like they used to."

■ We have yet another example of why entrepreneurial capitalism is the best friend this planet ever had. Intersource Technologies, a small Silicon Valley company, has developed a light bulb designed to run on radio waves. The new bulb, called the E-lamp, uses less than one-third the energy of conventional incandescent lighting. As a result, the emission of greenhouse gases will fall, fewer power plants will be built, and low-income families, who generally spend a larger fraction of income on utilities than richer families, will get a break. Lower energy costs will also increase economic growth and jobs, in sharp contrast to the economically destructive energy taxes and regulations under consideration at the Rio summit. Oh yes, some people will get very rich from this breakthrough. This will irritate the folks down in Rio. But for those who put the environment and living standards ahead of ideology, the E-lamp is a winner.

■ Ross Perot's days in the Navy have come under the media magnifying glass. When he was a lieutenant (j.g.), young Perot tried to get out of a four-year hitch by complaining to his congressmen that the Navy was a "Godless organization," beset by "promiscuity," and "taking God's name in vain" (like *Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead?*). Two decades later, middle-aged Perot told the papers that he had left the service because the promotion track had been too constipated for his tastes. Now, two decades after that, old Perot says he wanted out because his captain asked him to raid the crew's recreation fund to decorate the captain's cabin. One of Perot's ex-captains, conveniently, is dead. The other calls the latest story "absolutely, totally untrue." Perot has clammed up. Memo to Boss Ross: If you won't talk about what you're going to do, that leaves what you've done as the only subject. So make sure you get it right, Lieutenant.

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■ Corporations should either provide health insurance for employees directly, or be forced to pay a fee to the government to be used for that purpose: this, in a nutshell, is the "play or pay" plan for uninsured workers contained in the Kennedy–Rockefeller–Mitchell health-care legislation, and championed by Bill Clinton and Jerry Brown. Foisting financial burdens on business has long been a hallmark of Democratic social policy, but a recent study by the D.C.-based Partnership on Health Care and Employment provides a much-needed reality check. Most corporations affected could not absorb the additional health-care costs without lowering wages, hours, and non-mandated benefits, or cutting out jobs altogether. A total of 9.1 million workers would be at risk of losing their jobs, including 16 per cent of working blacks and Hispanics, 18 per cent of working women, and 83 per cent of workers earning less than $5,000 per year. Arkansas, with 19 per cent of jobs "at risk," is proportionately hit the hardest. Bill Clinton and Jerry Brown please note: Corporations are people too. Little people. Democrats.

■ A sign in Ho Chi Minh City, urging the workers of the world to make Vietnam a utopia, has been overshadowed by a larger, brighter sign that prods consumers to buy a certain brand of Japanese camera. Beneath the façade of a fading socialist dream is a booming subculture of capitalism. Workers of Ho Chi Minh City, shhh, just keep on working and let the Party hacks eat cake.

■ An amazing standup comic has emerged in . . . the Chinese politburo, and a cassette of his remarks to a meeting of senior officials is one of the hottest underground items in Peking. Tian Jiyun, a reform-minded deputy prime minister, proposed satirically that the government set up special zones in which hard-liners could live according to the prescriptions of Marxism. "Couldn't you establish a special economic zone for leftists?" he asked. "Salaries would be low, prices of goods would be low, you would rely on coupons, you would have to stand on line to buy everything and suffer everything else that goes with leftism." Tian then observed that economic zones that have adopted capitalist economic management are prospering. There are peals of laughter in the background of the cassette.

■ In *Newsweek*, Caroline Kennedy writes of her father that "I worry sometimes that the larger message of his life is being obscured. . . . His name is being exploited in a way that is an insult to him and his Presidency, and a disservice to all the people today who are working, in and out of public life, to make this country better." Well, JFK has certainly been dragged through the mud in recent years, but this had to follow his bizarre near-deification. His great genius was his *image*—charisma, media manipulation, careful positioning, boyish charm. After the assassination, the image became a popular myth, with the active help of his heirs. Liberal hagiographers and dishonest aides transformed a man with profound contempt for liberal softness—whose most successful domestic initiative was tax cuts, who ran to the right of Richard Nixon, struck deals with Mayor Daley, authorized wire taps and gonzo assassination attempts, and declined to act against racial discrimination—into a secular liberal saint. History is catching up.

■ Indeed, Miss Kennedy seems trapped in the myth. She makes quite a point that this year's John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award went to . . . Lowell Weicker, for his embrace of a state income tax *even though* he was criticized for it. Next year they can give it to Jay Leno for his courageous attacks on Dan Quayle.

■ Feminists are trying to break into that most exclusive of all-male societies, the Holy Trinity. And they're finding allies in the mainstream churches, according to a roundup piece in the *Wall Street Journal* by R. Gustav Niebuhr. The stodgier liberals, like Catholic liturgical revisionists, are dodging the issue by eliminating gender-specific pronouns. The more cutting-edge types, mostly Protestant, are calling God "Her," "Mother," and oddball things like "Baker-woman God." The great obstacle to these improvements is of course Jesus Christ, Who emphatically adopted the image of God as Father and even added the shocking intimacy of a nickname, "Abba"—the Aramaic version of "Daddy." The danger of renouncing the old metaphors is that it only seems to make God more remote. Niebuhr cites new images of God offered by members of one trendy Congregational church in Long Beach: a cloud, a formless spirit, Mother Earth. "It's like atoms," says one. His wife adds: "I'm evolving into a sort of neo-pagan. I envision the universe as God and all in the universe as

Have You Seen Him?

Has anyone seen Clinton?
  It seems like ages since
I read about him in the store
  While checking out some quince.
I don't know why I'm asking;
  It's just that on TV
I used to see him every night
  Along with Hillary.

W. H. VON DREELE

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CONSUMER CHOICE
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The system is the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, which covers nine million federal employees and retirees, including all members of Congress.

With minor modifications, an FEHB-type system could be expanded to cover all Americans. In fact, the Heritage Foundation's Consumer Choice Health Plan is based on the same principles: choice and competition.

While President Bush's health-care reform plan has helped reshape the debate over health care, it doesn't go far enough. As The Wall Street Journal put it recently: "The resulting Bush plan lacks the imagination of the innovative market reforms like those proposed by the Heritage Foundation."

Columnist Michael Kinsley, writing in The New Republic and The Washington Post, added: "The Heritage proposal should have great appeal to principled liberals, as well as principled conservatives."

All 535 members of Congress enjoy the benefits of consumer choice in health care. If it's good enough for them, surely it's good enough for all Americans.

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part of God." But as C. S. Lewis observed, when you get rid of traditional human images of God you tend to fall into the subhuman. Clouds and atoms don't make commandments and answer prayers. And worshipping a hermaphroditic deity fashioned by ideological requirements destroys the essential element of the experience: awe of the divine presence.

■ A warm welcome to *Heterodoxy*, a monthly tabloid edited by David Horowitz and Peter Collier (of *Second Thoughts* fame), which is chock full of intelligent, punchy "articles and animadversions on political correctness and other follies." The first issue includes pieces on the anti-anti-PC movement, gay-rights censorship in Hollywood, PBS's love affair with American Communists, and the tomahawk chop. The six-page spread on "the ten worst college administrators," which includes Stanford's Donald Kennedy, Donna Shalala of the University of Wisconsin, and Bernard Harleston of the City College of New York, is a fine sketch of how multiculturalism-mongers, zealous censors, and hate-group appeasers operate. The short items include the actual text of the Bob Kerrey lesbian joke, a description of Gus Hall's luxurious estates, and the Cornell West Award for Exposition to Cornell University's Kathryn Rios, who told an audience, "In terms of feminist discourse, silence is never addressed in a positive way, it's only addressed as a negative. . . . Everything I know about silence has been informed by speech." For information contact the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, Suite 304, 12400 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, Calif. 90405.

■ Two indecisive practitioners of PC reached a truly innovative nuptial compromise. "Valerie Jane Silverman . . ." the *New York Times* announced, "was married yesterday to Michael Thomas Flaherty . . ." Mr. and Mrs. Flaherty is passé; Mr. Flaherty and Ms. Silverman is confusing; Flaherty-Silverman is cumbersome. So . . . introducing Mr. and Mrs. *Flaherman* (no kidding). But why didn't they make it Flaherpeople?

■ One of those arrested for looting in Los Angeles was a gentleman who had won $3 million in the state lottery.

■ Federal looting to pay for the damage in Los Angeles so far totals $1.2 billion with no end in sight. Congressmen are still in a rage over such squalid conditions as a lack of check-cashing facilities, higher haircut prices, etc., so the rampage is sure to continue.

■ Minor-party candidate Bill Clinton staked out his claim to total oblivion with fond recollections of the 1960s. "It was a time when people overwhelmingly believed that they owed something to each other. It was a time when people were reaching out to each other," and so on and on, to "thunderous applause" from "the San Francisco audience." What's a few bombings, cities burned and all that? The thing is, let's have the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago all over again and relive the sweetness.

■ What will the President know and when will he know it?

The Conventional Wisdom

Sometime between the Fourth and when
The dog days suck the oxygen
From August air, Perot's supposed
(If not already decomposed)
To self-destruct with one big bang—
Unless he's one big boomerang.

W. H. VON DREELE

Balkan Horrors

THE BALKAN tragedy has reached a new stage. The Serbian military assault on Bosnia continues, in the form of a blockade and artillery shelling of its capital, Sarajevo; the historic Croatian city of Dubrovnik continues under bombardment. On May 30, the UN Security Council passed an extraordinary resolution mandating the severest economic sanctions against Serbia; it prohibits all trade, including air traffic and the supply of oil, and freezes all overseas assets. These measures are necessary, but no one should suppose they are sufficient to halt the Serbian drive. What next?

It is essential, first of all, to urge calm on those of our fellow citizens—and they are a strange collection of bedfellows, Right and Left—who seem bent on involving NATO or the United States in direct military action. It is far from self-evident that such a drastic commitment is warranted either by the facts of the situation or by the American national interest. The breathless calls for armed intervention are most amusing when they come from liberals (Leslie Gelb of the *New York Times* comes to mind) who are, at all other times, in the vanguard of those demanding reductions in our military capability.

Second, the focus of American policy must be to shore up the European system—the relationship among the major powers—so that it can withstand the shocks of this kind of ethnic turbulence in the ex-Communist East. This may be the best thing we can do in a region that is a hornet's nest of multiple ha-

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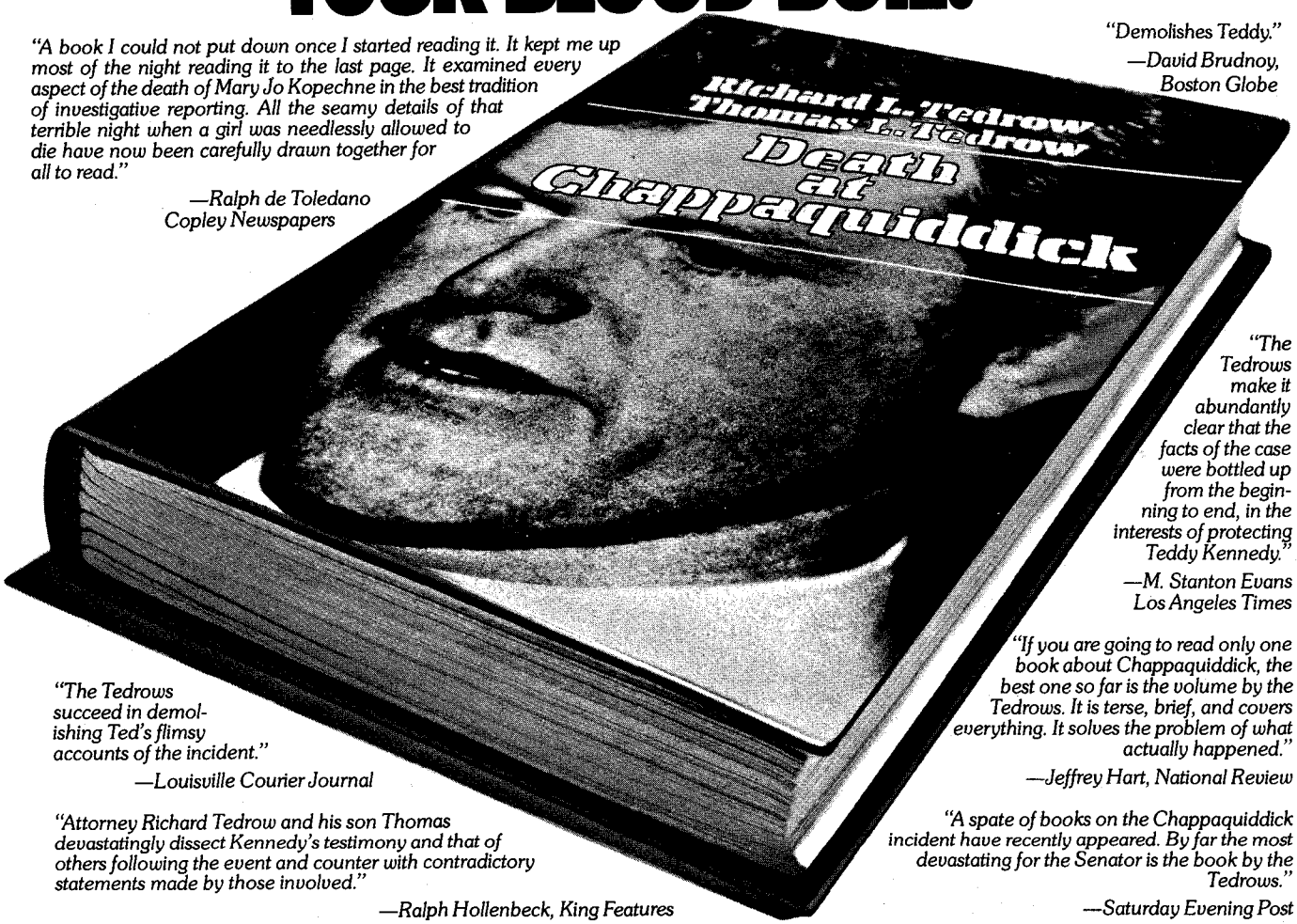
—Ralph de Toledano
Copley Newspapers

"Demolishes Teddy."

—David Brudnoy,
Boston Globe



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—M. Stanton Evans
Los Angeles Times

"The Tedrows succeed in demolishing Ted's flimsy accounts of the incident."

—Louisville Courier Journal

"If you are going to read only one book about Chappaquiddick, the best one so far is the volume by the Tedrows. It is terse, brief, and covers everything. It solves the problem of what actually happened."

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—Saturday Evening Post

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treds and re-emerging ancient grievances. It would not be a minor accomplishment, either. Unlike the situation in 1914, the major powers in Europe (the United States, Russia, Germany, Britain, France), while they have differing perceptions, are not in the business of aligning themselves against one another over the Yugoslav issue; they have more important business to conduct with one another. This is the ultimate safeguard against the Yugoslav crisis spilling over into a more significant European conflagration. We must keep it that way.

Third, however, the dangers of this crisis are sufficient to warrant more than benign neglect. The centrifugal forces could spread to other countries in Eastern Europe, and the Macedonian problem has the potential to engage our ally Turkey. (Keep your eye on Turkey in all of this; its pivotal role in the Near East *does* constitute a significant Western strategic interest, even if Yugoslavia itself does not.) Thus, even in the midst of a presidential election campaign, the United States must involve itself with its allies to fashion a coherent policy.

Fourth, we are paying the price for six months of a quite misguided policy. The Administration held far too long to the fiction of a united Yugoslavia. To this day, we cling to the absurd policy of an arms embargo against all parties—which reinforces the Yugoslav Army's military superiority and almost guarantees the continuation of its aggression. As *NR* has suggested before, unless a balance of forces is restored, all mediation efforts are a pathetic waste of time. This means, as soon as possible, enabling the republics resisting Serbian aggression to arm and defend themselves, if it is not too late. A year ago, in the Persian Gulf, we all understood that economic sanctions alone never work; we should not forget this truism now.

Fifth, there is a useful lesson to be drawn about the perpetual problem of European tribalism, and not only in Eastern and Central Europe. The EC's mediating efforts were doomed by the divisions among its members as well as by the inadequacies of its mediator, Lord Carrington. More broadly, the lesson is that without a strong and permanent American political and military presence in Europe, our sophisticated European friends are quite capable of sending the whole Continent up in flames yet again.

The Perot Phenomenon

WHATEVER one thinks of Ross Perot, it's inconceivable that he would have run against Ronald Reagan. And it's hard to believe he would have run against George Bush, if Mr. Bush had acted like Reagan's successor.

But on taxes, quotas, environmentalism, and even Murphy Brown, Mr. Bush has let the media and the Beltway opinionators bluff him into running away from winning positions. Each time he has lost ground. Yet he never seems to learn. Ordinary people panic from weakness. Mr. Bush has a unique way of panicking from strength.

He has also surpassed every politician in recorded history in demolishing his own base. Just a year ago one poll gave him an amazing 92 per cent approval rating. Now he barely peers above 40 per cent. He took conservative support for granted, reasoning from the dogma of the two-party system that disaffected conservatives had "nowhere else to go." And failing to take disaffection in his own party seriously, he was caught flat-footed by Pat Buchanan's primary challenge. He would be in a far worse position today if the Democrats had not been alienating their own supporters consistently over twenty years. Just as Mr. Bush has depressed conservatives (and, it must be conceded, pro-choice Republicans), so the radical liberalism of Democratic presidential candidates—frank in the case of Walter Mondale, disguised in the case of Bill Clinton—has driven out the "Reagan Democrats." This dual disaffection is the cause of the Ross Perot phenomenon.

It's odd for so decisive a character to be all things to all men. But Ross Perot is partly himself and partly what people seek, or fear.

To the political establishment, Republicans and Democrats alike, he was at first a joke—a dilettante who thought all you needed to break into the political elite was a few ideas and a lot of money. Over the last four months, they may not have come to respect Perot, but they have certainly come to fear him. Side-by-side headlines in last Sunday's *New York Times* tell the story: "Pressure Is Growing on President to Bring Baker In for Campaign / Aides See Perot as a Threat to Bush's Re-election" and "Bush and Clinton Staggering to End of Primary Season / Perot Stealing Spotlight."

To large numbers of the American people the point of Perot is precisely that he is not part of that establishment. As WFB points out in his column (see p. 62), a candidate cannot go on forever appealing equally to liberals and to conservatives; but for now, each side is delighted to listen to someone who will tell them that the purveyors of political expertise have done the country no good.

Can conservatives back him? Maybe not; but let's see how he develops. He talks refreshing sense about too much taxation and government spending—but as a big recipient of government funds he comes with a tainted record. He believes in Christian morality—but he also believes abortion is "the woman's decision" and, for no good reason, he found the Senate's treatment of Anita Hill "reprehensible." He wants to cut through the web of congressional wheeling and

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dealing—but he seems weak on the difference between congressional customs and constitutional imperatives. In foreign affairs, he is capable of trenchant action—everyone mentions the hostage rescue—but on specifics of foreign policy he is an unknown quantity.

Conservatives have to be suspicious of someone with such a piebald and random philosophy. But suspicion and opposition are not the same thing. We do not, after all, enjoy the luxury of a presidential candidate who shares our outlook in quite the wholehearted way that Ronald Reagan did. Both Mr. Bush and Mr. Perot are in their different ways unsatisfactory standard-bearers. We still think it likely that, in the final analysis, we will grit our teeth and vote for Mr. Bush in November. But Mr. Perot should not despair of winning the conservative vote; and Mr. Bush should not take it for granted.

We have somewhere else to go.

The Boys in Brazil

NO INCREASE in environmental concern, authentic or orchestrated, can alleviate science's ignorance of the reality underlying global climate change. Subtle in its chemistry, chaotic in its flow, the atmosphere defies the attempts of computer modelers to provide certain answers upon which policy can depend.

So beware those who claim the gift of prophecy and the right to dictate a macroeconomic agenda at the Rio Ecosummit—no scientists these. Prominent among them is Prime Minister Gro Brundtland of Norway, who just happens to be vice president of the Socialist International. By the merest coincidence she and her crew at Rio are demanding the redistribution of the First World's wealth to enable the underdeveloped nations to catch up on energy effi-

RIGHT DATA

Getting Hot in Rio

AS COMPLICATED as the matter is, it appears that magnetic storms on the sun may have more to do with the earth's climate than the build-up of greenhouse gases on earth, according to a recent study by scientists at the George C. Marshall Institute.

Rising solar activity recorded over the past 100 years is consistent with a 0.7 per cent brightening of the sun—enough to explain the entire 0.5°C global warming over this period. The sun's pervasive influence is also confirmed by analysis of the amount of Carbon-14 in ancient tree rings. The isotope, known to fluctuate with solar activity, rises and falls by substantial amounts every 200 to 300 years, invariably presaging major changes in climate.

The greenhouse model, meanwhile, cannot explain the rapid rise in global temperature in the decades prior to 1940, or why average temperature dropped between 1940 and 1970, a period of rapid growth in CO_2 emissions but declining solar activity. This suggests that the worst-case scenario—a doubling of CO_2 and other greenhouse gases over the next century—would raise global temperatures by less than 1°C, and maybe less than 0.5°C.

The lack of hard greenhouse evidence hasn't stopped participants in the Rio "Earth Summit" from pushing for caps on CO_2 emissions. (See table.) The world's advanced nations, with less than 25 per cent of world population, produce roughly 60 per cent of annual CO_2 emissions. If the UN, in its infinite wisdom, were to distribute CO_2 quotas on a per-capita basis, the industrialized nations would have about a third (the U.S. less than one-quarter) of what is needed to produce at current levels.

The less developed countries (LDCs), on the other hand, could reap a cash windfall by selling their excess CO_2 entitlements to developed nations. The market price for such quotas, according to a recent study, could reach $25 to $75 per ton, implying a transfer of up to $200 billion annually from the developed to the developing world. (Foreign aid from the OECD nations to LDCs is, by contrast, a mere $50 billion.)

A prudent policy would weigh economic costs against likely environmental benefits. A 20 per cent reduction in CO_2 emissions, favored by many Greens, would require that gasoline prices increase by $1.30 per gallon (1990 dollars), electricity rates double, and the oil price by $60 a barrel. According to the Department of Energy, this would cost the economy nearly $100 billion by the end the decade.

—Ed Rubenstein

Share of Global Emissions
Population, and GNP, 1986

	U.S.	Other Industrial Nations	Less Developed Countries
CO_2 Emissions	23%	37%	30%
Population	5	18	77
GNP	26	58	16

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ciency, and a carbon tax to compel the wicked West to cease its profligacy.

One is unlikely to glean from the televangelism of the Summit's supporters that here in America, CO_2 emissions per constant dollar of GNP have *declined* by a whopping 27 per cent since 1973. Yet such statistics, together with a growing *lack* of scientific consensus, have forced many ecopundits to try a bait-and-switch. Instead of global warming, in which CO_2 plays a role, but an unquantifiable one, they have changed the subject to ozone depletion—all the while still muttering darkly about CO_2.

This is not to counsel indifference to CO_2 bracket creep, but the dystopic prospect of doubling its concentration is generations away. Still, here and now, investing wisely in the development of the high technology of energy efficiency is to be commended—when fuel is saved, money is made. And as a further reminder to our posterity that conservatives *invented* conservation, we can plant a bounty of trees. President Bush's call for forestry programs was not a joke. Whatever the reason, he got it right.

Reinventing New York

THE TYPICAL New York politician, Democrat or Republican, gives polite lip service to privatization, school choice, deregulation, and other non-bureaucratic means of delivering services. Other states experiment; the Empire State raises taxes, drives out business, and suffers a disproportionate share of the nation's unemployment.

But even New York cannot isolate itself from fresh ideas forever, as witness a conference on New York City government recently sponsored by the Manhattan Institute, a conservative policy group, and the Citizens Union, a liberal group. The session made two things unmistakably clear: local government is the crucial factor in determining the quality of life, and the present system of top-down governance simply doesn't work.

The panel of journalists, City College professors, school-board members, and former city politicos reached a consensus far closer to the new paradigms of Jack Kemp and Jim Pinkerton than to the moribund old ones of Mario Cuomo and David Dinkins. In education, for example, participants held out no hope for improvement so long as the only "choices" were those made by the five-thousand-man central administration. Zoning deregulation would alleviate homelessness far more effectively than public shelters in a city where, not so long ago, private contractors built 100,000 unsubsidized dwellings each year. New York's Medicaid program is needlessly expensive, costing three times more per patient than the market-driven ones in other states.

The conferees didn't emerge unscathed, however. Some members of the audience questioned how the lily-white, all-male panel could presume to know what's right for the blacks, Hispanics, and Asians who now make up more than half the city. If you can't attack the message, attack the messenger.

Esprit de Korps

THE FRENCH have done it again, and this time it's serious. The Franco-German army corps that Kohl and Mitterrand have now unveiled confirms the worst fears of those who care about the continued integrity of the North Atlantic Alliance, which is all the more essential in a new era of European instability. The United States has more or less embraced the British/Italian idea of turning the Western European Union into both a European caucus within NATO and a defense caucus in the EC. Yet as American policy has become more conciliatory to the idea of accommodating the famous "European identity," French policy has become worse. The French have flaunted the fact that the new Franco-German corps is outside the NATO command as a contribution to European independence from the United States and as a hedge against the day (which the French seem determined to hasten) when the Americans leave Europe.

Nothing could be more short-sighted. For forty years, the fact that the Bundeswehr was embedded in NATO's integrated command has been a source of reassurance to all of Germany's neighbors. The French are deluding themselves if they think they can be an adequate counterweight to German power by themselves, without the United States. The U.S., to its credit, shows no sign of eagerness to abandon its responsibility to help maintain the balance of power in Europe; what could make that happen some day is precisely the kind of irresponsibility displayed by the French. Weakening NATO is dangerous for the West, and more dangerous for France.

Pravda Will Out

IN LATE MAY, Sergei Shakhrai, an aide to Boris Yeltsin, announced to reporters that a cache of thousands of Communist Party documents had been discovered that detailed the Kremlin's financing of international terrorism since the mid 1970s. Some $20 million a year, as well as weapons, went to organizations like the Palestinian PFLP, for example, "to carry out operations against American and Israeli personnel in third countries," Shakhrai said, and "to carry out acts of sabotage and terror-

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ism." Some of the documents are to be released in a court case testing the legality of Yeltsin's ban on the Communist Party as a "criminal organization."

It was yet another of the breathtaking revelations vindicating what many of us were saying all along. A special tribute goes to Brian Crozier, Claire Sterling, Alexander Haig, and Ronald Reagan, among others, who made this case in the early 1980s, only to be hooted at by those either blind to or uncomfortable with the vile reality of Soviet policy.

Russian authorities are doing the world—and themselves—a great service by coming clean. They must be congratulated for their honesty and encouraged to let the full truth emerge. Revealing the truth about the past is not of interest just to historians; nothing more definitively underscores the break with the Communist past and its discredited political and economic system. The foundation of trust the Russians need to build under the new East–West relations depends on it. Conversely, the successor-KGB's reticence about *its* past—especially when accompanied by its continued industrial espionage in the present—raises doubts about how systematic a change has in fact occurred.

School's Out—Down and Out

WHEN Benno Schmidt announced that he was leaving the presidency of Yale University to head Christopher Whittle's Edison Project, he highlighted crisis conditions at two levels of education.

The immediate crisis was at Yale. In six years on the job, Schmidt had been a record fundraiser. Getting some control over spending, however, proved to be too daunting a task. Schmidt's capable number-two man, classicist Donald Kagan, had already come to the same conclusion, resigning the post of dean. Yale's problem, as Kagan saw it, was an "imperial faculty," dedicated to protecting its own jobs while unwilling to protect students or even professors from politically correct fashion. Schmidt's predecessor, the late A. Bartlett Giamatti, once explained his decision to leave Yale and take up the post of Commissioner of Baseball by saying that in his new job, he would be dealing with a better class of people. Schmidt would probably have been willing to become Commissioner of Pro Wrestling.

The job he moved to has been called into existence by the current state of primary and secondary education. Christopher Whittle proposes to found a nationwide chain of for-profit private schools, using among other innovations the television technology he has pioneered with Channel One, a 12-minute news programs shown in ten thousand high schools and junior highs. Channel One has been criticized for running commercials, and for not measurably improving students' knowledge of current events. But Whittle would be attacked if he were Noah Webster II, for he threatens the education establishment—unlike U.S. Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander, who claims to favor school choice but has done nothing to further it. Republicans in North Carolina had a chance to embrace real reform by choosing school-choice proponent Vernon L. Robinson as their nominee for state school superintendent over Teena Little, an establishment Republican who backs the Alexander approach; but Robinson lost by two thousand votes in Tuesday's primary.

American universities have always had problems, or at least critics. Robert Hutchins and Mortimer Adler criticized them; so, in its genial way, did Owen Johnson's *Stover at Yale*. The derelictions of America's public schools are something else. Local schools have long been the focal point of community life, the function of government that most Americans care most about. The fact that an entrepreneur sees a chance to move in, and that an Ivy League president is willing to help him, speaks volumes about the education establishment's failure to educate.

Mr. Baker, Call Your Office

The Republicans yearn for a *whoosh!*
Or at least a respectable push
  While they stare at Perot
  As a bug eyes a crow,
But the squeakiest wheel's Mr. Bush.

W. H. VON DREELE

Richmond News Leader, R I P

ON MAY 30, the *Richmond News Leader*, one of the nation's great newspapers, published its last issue. The headline, from Poe, read, "NEVERMORE."

The newspaper had been published for 104 years, but its golden age was marked by the editorship of Douglas Southall Freeman, the Pulitzer Prize–winning biographer of Robert E. Lee and George Washington. Its contributions to national journalism were extraordinary, including James Jackson Kilpatrick, who ran the opinion page from 1951 to 1967, cartoonist Jeff MacNelly, a national presence, Roger Mudd, who soon went on to TV, and the most recent editor, Ross Mackenzie.

The *News Leader* succumbed to the troubled fortunes of afternoon newspapers, and has been folded into its sister paper, the *Times-Dispatch*, with most

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"To life, liberty, and the pursuit of avoiding taxes."

of its employees joining the new entity. But this distinctive journalistic voice will be missed. Its disappearance represents yet another advance of homogenization and yet another erosion of the sense of place in American journalism. *Ave atque vale.*

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Urgent to WFB:

Concerning the word "chigetai"* ["Notes & Asides," March 16]. I urge you to use it often before anyone else co-opts it. We have a lot of them here in Connecticut, only we call them "liberals."

Yours for life!
Paul R. Bruch MD
Southbury, Conn.

*Chigetai: A long-eared wild ass from outer Mongolia (*Webster's Third New International*).

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

You probably have heard of Alan M. Turing, a mathematician upon whose work a large part of today's computer-science theory rests. Among his many accomplishments is the so-called "Turing test," a thought experiment for deciding if a machine is intelligent. The setting for the Turing test is two windowless, locked rooms. Inside one is a machine, inside the other is a human being. Both rooms are connected to the outside world by teletype machines. The machine passes the Turing test if it is impossible for an outside examiner communicating with the two rooms to determine which one contains the machine. The machine's goal is to convince the examiner that a person is handling its end of the conversation; the human being is trying to convince the examiner that *he* is the person. The examiner may ask any question of the occupant of either room in the effort to decide which is the machine.

A story on our local NPR affiliate reported that literature professors are now calling a college course devoted to the works of Mark Twain, James Fenimore Cooper, Herman Melville, and Stephen Crane, not "Nineteenth Century American Literature," but "Nineteenth Century White Male American Literature." It dawned on me that the Turing test could be used to think about this example of Political Correctness. If we could put anyone else of the period (preferably from a minority group) in one room and, say, Mark Twain, in the other room, could one of these college professors tell them apart (Mark Twain trying to convince the examiner that he was the other person)? If one is convinced that Twain could do a credible job then (logically) there would be no need for the additional qualifiers in the course title.

The point of the radio report (needless to say) was that white males are not capable of expressing (or even understanding) the perspective of the downtrodden; that the literature of white males lacks relevance to other cultural groups; etc.; etc. This thought experiment puts the beliefs of the Politically Correct crowd to a theoretically objective test.

What other Turing tests would be revealing? Here is a partial list:

David Duke and Louis Farrakhan
Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill
John Kenneth Galbraith and WFB
Ted Kennedy and Rush Limbaugh

The Turing test (as adapted here) asks the question: Are these people able to convince you they are the other person? Turing developed a truly "color blind" litmus test not only for intelligence, but also for understanding another point of view. Of course, this *is* just a thought experiment. Too bad.

Ed Green
Castleton, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Green: I like it! Imagine John Marshall in one room and Earl Warren in the other! Great fun. I *like* Mr. Turing. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear WFB:

My son gave me a gift subscription to *NR*. He said this magazine shares many of my views. I found this to be true; however, to read and understand *NR* I had to buy a new up-to-date dictionary, and I had to buy an electronic Thesaurus (which never leaves my side) and take English as a second language.

It reminds me of what kept me out of college . . . getting out of high school.

Sincerely,
Russell A. Khoury
Paramus, N.J.

Dear Mr. Khoury: Sorry about that. But there's nothing we can do to prevent our writers from being literate. Cordially, **—WFB**

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ON THE SCENE

Too Much Mr. Nice Guy

JAMES BOWMAN

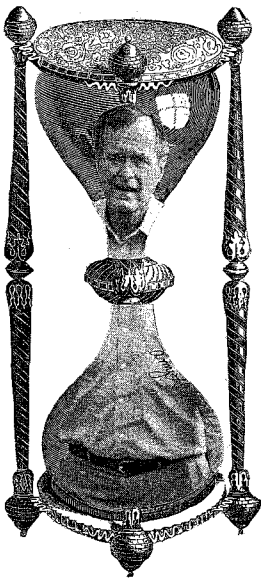
WASHINGTON, D.C.

LASALLE LASALLE, the black man who says that it was a speech by George Bush 11 years ago which changed his life and kept him from turning out onto the streets of Los Angeles with the rioters, may be the only person ever for whom a speech by George Bush inspired any thought more stirring than a murmured affirmation that the speaker "seems like a nice man." He *is* a nice man, no doubt about it. Far too nice. Fortunately, there are signs that his Vice President is becoming less nice.

Dan Quayle's unkind words about Murphy Brown provoked an eruption of anger and resentment on the Left that does the heart good. I only wish I could believe that Quayle had done it, as his critics allege, from cynical political calculation and not out of Bush-like sincerity. His thoughts on "values" probably come, as his speechwriters insist, "all from the guy."

Still, there is the cheering thought that Quayle has the power, in Russell Baker's phrase, "to cloud men's minds." Baker is referring, in particular, to the minds of liberal Democrats, who, rather than pass up an opportunity to heap scorn on the Vice President's head, have recently found themselves appearing to attack love, marriage, and intact families. Quayle's advocacy of such things shows, according to Hillary Clinton, that he is "out of touch" with "real problems and real people."

Such mind-clouding is even more apparent in *Time* magazine, which marshalled not one, not two, not three, but four of its heavy hitters to insist in four different ways that what Quayle said about family values was perfectly



Amy Wasserman

correct, but that it was perfectly scandalous of him to have said it.

Russell Baker's own column is a good example of the curious phenomenon it is meant to call our attention to, since he can't allow himself to say that the speech was "unexceptionable" without also saying: 1) that it is scary that our leaders spend their evenings watching sitcoms (Quayle himself did not see the *Murphy Brown* show that he criticized), 2) that Quayle is "the essential residue of media politics" because he is good-looking, and 3) that the speech was a "fairly obvious attempt by Republicans to play the old race card"—all just in case anyone should suppose that such a clever man as he is might take Dan Quayle seriously.

This blind contempt for Quayle on the part of his enemies is really a great strength and one which I hope he can learn to take advantage of. If Quayle has the startled look of a deer caught in the headlights, the frantic scurryings of his liberal critics are like those of cockroaches when the kitchen light is switched on. They know that Quayle is exposing the extent of their own depredations against the social fabric and just *hate* the fact that most Americans will agree with him.

Unfortunately, what should have been an unalloyed triumph for conservatives was spoiled by presidential niceness. Although Bush had said many of the same things as Quayle in his commencement speech at Notre Dame the week before, he could not allow himself to seem too much in agreement with his own Vice President. It turns out that Quayle has the power to cloud the minds of his allies as well as those of his enemies.

Who got to Marlin Fitzwater between his first statement of support for Quayle and his backtracking before the morning was over? One theory, whispered about in the Quayle camp, holds that it was neither of the usual suspects, Sam Skinner nor Bob Teeter, but a highly placed Administration woman—perhaps Mary Matalin, the deputy campaign manager for political operations, or Torie Clarke, the campaign press secretary—who put it to him that somehow an attack on Murphy Brown was insulting to women.

This interpretation of the Administration's disarray is supported by John E. Yang and Ann Devroy in the *Washington Post*, who quoted "Administration women" as being "steamed":

> "Does the Vice President know that the President's daughter is a single mother?" asked one GOP woman. . . . Said another, "How dare he suggest that all these women struggling to raise children can't do it without a man?"

Quayle's own clarification the same day—"I have the greatest respect for single mothers. They are true heroes"—seemed designed to turn down the temperature on some of those "steamed" women without actually recanting. Yet to Fitzwater's attempt to make the fictional Miss Brown more acceptable as the embodiment of "pro-life values," Quayle shot back: "That is not correct. *Murphy Brown*, the show, does not represent pro-life policies. . . . Probably the only reason they chose to have a child rather than an abortion was because they knew the ratings would go up higher having the child."

Naturally there was an attempt to make light of these internal tensions. Fitzwater jocularly offered to marry

Mr. Bowman is the American editor of the TLS.

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either Murphy Brown or Candice Bergen, the actress who plays her, and said that the story was "maybe even as big as broccoli." Everything was meant to have been neatly resolved in the President's formula that "children should have the benefit of being born into families with a mother and a father."

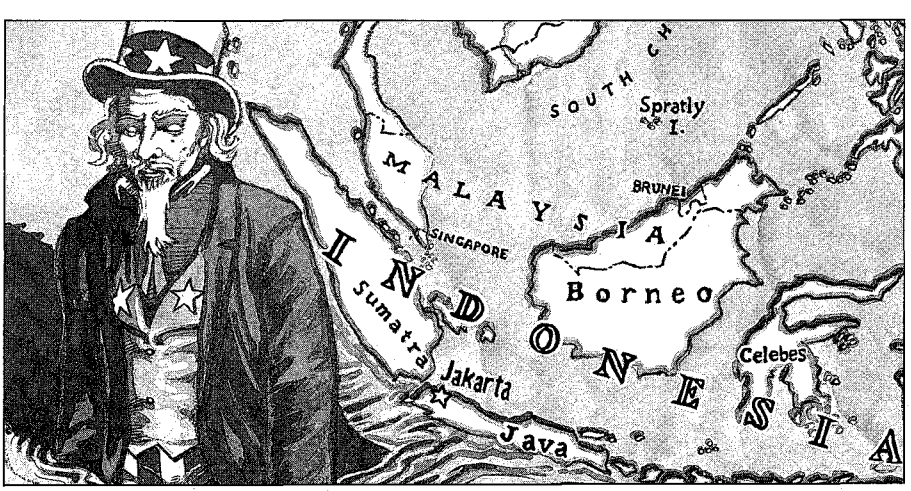
Oddly, that anodyne sentiment was precisely what Quayle's critics were falsely accusing him of—as if, in the words of *Time*'s egregious Lance Morrow, he were still living in an "*Ozzie and Harriet* universe, with its freckle-faced nuclear-family suburban reassurances." In fact, that wistful nostalgic dream is a better characterization of Bush's attitude than Quayle's. The Vice President, unlike his boss, had not been so feeble as to say that a two-parent family was merely "the best environment" in which to bring up kids. He had had the guts to say what is statistically undeniable, that kids not so brought up tend to be disproportionately dangerous social malcontents given to activities like rioting.

But that cannot be said. Or, if it is said, it cannot be heard by the feminist consensus which is so influential in the media and maybe also in the Bush campaign. A perfect example is Hillary Clinton's counterattack at Wellesley College, where she insisted on misunderstanding Quayle's speech as an attempt to lecture "women who pack lunches for their kids or take the early bus to work or stay out late at the PTA or spend every spare minute trying to take care of aging parents" about values.

It would be tedious to disentangle the many strands of error in this characterization of the speech, but what is clear is that the idealized portrait of single women that it weaves is far more fuzzily romantic than anything Quayle was guilty of. For the fact that there are lots of single women who do all these things, and bake cookies too, has nothing to do with the real values issue: that the *choice* to bring up children without a father, whoever makes it, is damaging to the children and to the society in which they are thus less well fitted to take their place. Those, like Hillary Clinton, who pretend not to see that or, like George Bush, who think it not quite polite to the ladies to mention it, are the ones who are really out of touch. □

Years of Living Prosperously

ROBERT ELEGANT



Fred Carlson

JAKARTA

THE Toyota battles its way through traffic that grows more clotted as the tropical dusk abruptly turns into black night. The air-conditioning sputters, and the needle of the temperature gauge hits the top. With the air-conditioning off to keep the radiator from boiling over, the passengers are soon soaked with sweat. Through the opened windows flow the odors of the street: garlic and hot peppers; cheap perfume and clove cigarettes; gasoline and diesel fumes; frangipani, coconut-milk curry, and goat meat sizzling over wood-fires.

The Toyota is mired among unmoving vans, trucks, cars, and motorcycles. A battered red Nissan makes an illegal left turn up the one-way street, left wheels on the pavement, right fenders brushing the immobilized law-abiding cars. Others follow.

With that maneuver, the gridlock eases enough for a bus to poke its nose into the intersection. An adolescent wearing a baseball cap and a sarong jumps down, smartly gets the traffic moving, albeit very slowly, and jumps back on as the bus pulls away.

Such coagulation is normal for Jakarta at 6 P.M. The capital of Indonesia already counts at least eight million inhabitants. Despite efforts to discourage the influx, Jakarta is growing by hundreds, perhaps thousands, every week.

The Toyota struggles past Clodok, the old Chinatown, toward Medan Merdeka, Independence Square, at the city's center. Under the rainbow glare of neon signs, we pass hastily erected buildings with gaudy façades, which house garages, factories, schools, restaurants, banks, and supermarkets—the exuberant new shoots thrust up by an old agricultural land entering the industrial/information age.

We are coming from the new international airport, diplomatically called Sukarno–Hatta after the two leaders of the fight for independence from the Dutch, who began as allies and ended as enemies. The present administration is eager not to revive the political feuds in which hundreds of thousands died.

Kemayoran, the old airport now engulfed by the city, was dirty, noisy, ill lit, crumbling, and malodorous. Arriving travelers, having finally escaped purposefully rude immigration officers and extortionate customs men, had to fight their way through throngs of idlers who came to watch the airplanes. Many then exchanged their dollars for soiled rupiahs brandished by black-market dealers.

Kemayoran was probably the most unpleasant major airport in the world. Sukarno–Hatta may not be the most efficient, but it works well. Dispersed gates, reached by open walkways under red-tile roofs, are charming—and there are no more idlers. Too much to do. Nor are there any money changers, since there is no more black market. A confident government allows the rupiah to find its own level.

The new Indonesia is, above all,

Mr. Elegant, a novelist and journalist, is the author of Pacific Destiny.

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Washington's Good Health Starts Here

The George Washington University Medical Center is looking for a new Vice President for Medical Affairs and Executive Dean. The previous vice president has just left GW, after 20 years, to accept the presidency of the National Board of Medical Examiners. We stress that applicants who seek this job should have a good beeper. Because you never know who's going to show up—often a senator or a congressman, an ambassador...and sometimes even the President.

And that's just for starters. Besides our high profile clientele, we provide medical care for all segments of the Washington population.

The George Washington University, founded in 1821, is located on an urban 45-acre campus in the historic Foggy Bottom district of the nation's capital, within walking distance of the White House, the U.S. Department of State and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The National Institutes of Health is located in nearby Bethesda, Md.

The George Washington University
WASHINGTON DC
MEDICAL CENTER

The University is a mature educational and research institution comprised of seven schools and offering 85 undergraduate and 70 doctoral programs, including M.D., Ph.D., Ed.D., D.Sc. and the J.D., as well as 170 master's degrees.

A major component of the University is the Medical Center, which includes a 600-student School of Medicine and Health Sciences, recently ranked 10th in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report* among those medical schools emphasizing primary care.

Another element of the Medical Center is the 501-bed hospital, which President Ronald Reagan called "one of the best and most important in the nation" and "a national treasure." President Reagan's life was saved at GW following an assassination attempt in 1981, and GW physicians are routinely consulted by the White House and many government agencies. The Medical Center also includes a 250-member full-time faculty physician practice and a rapidly growing Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), with more than 50,000 members.

A major research institution with more than $35 million currently committed in extramural support, the GW Medical Center conducts additional research activity at The Children's National Medical Center, the medical staff of which comprises GW's pediatric faculty. Investigators at GW enjoy proximity to NIH and other federal research laboratories and programs.

For fiscal year 1991, the University's operating budget was $510 million, of which $270 million represented Medical Center activity. Current University endowment is more than $300 million, ranking 47th in the nation.

The Vice President for Medical Affairs reports directly to President Stephen Joel Trachtenberg and is a member of the senior administrative team of the University. He or she is responsible for all programs and operations of the Medical Center. As Chief Executive Officer of the Medical Center, the Vice President for Medical Affairs exercises academic and administrative responsibility over the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, the University Hospital, the 330 full-time basic science and clinical faculty, the 300 active voluntary physician faculty and The George Washington University Health Plan. The Medical Center is currently implementing a new strategic plan that will result in physical facility reconstruction and major programmatic changes, including new centers of emphasis on Cardiovascular Diseases, Emergency Medicine, Oncology, and Neurosciences. The new Vice President for Medical Affairs will be a significant player in the process that will lead the Medical Center into the 21st Century.

Candidates must have an M.D. or Ph.D. degree and extensive experience related to the administrative management of a university medical center. The position requires understanding and leadership in medical education, basic science and clinical research, hospital administration, health care delivery, fiscal management and strategic planning. A record of leadership and superior managerial and interpersonal skills are vital. The successful candidate must understand the Medical Center's teaching and research mission and yet be able to handle the realities of budgetary constraints and a changing medical practice environment. A sense of humor will help, as will tenacity and vision. Compensation will be competitive and negotiable depending upon qualifications and experience.

Applications and nominations will be reviewed commencing mid-summer 1992 and will continue until the position is filled. Interested candidates should send a resume with a cover letter and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of three references to:

Ms. Cleo Graves
Office of the President
The George Washington University
Rice Hall, 8th Floor
Washington, DC 20052

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self-confident. "The Javanese deal with even the Japanese as equals," a European diplomat mused to me. "They know their culture is at least as old and distinguished."

Indonesia is foremost in the second tier in Southeast Asia, having moved rapidly from capricious economic and political *dirigisme* to a modified free-market economy and a modified authoritarian government after overthrowing the tyrant Sukarno in 1966. With Thailand and Malaysia, Indonesia is avidly grasping the opportunities of the New Economic Age created by Japanese leadership and by the energy of the first tier, the "lesser dragons": Singapore and Hong Kong in the region, Taiwan and South Korea farther north.

New international conditions coincidentally accompany the New Economic Age. Marxism–Leninism self-destructed during Southeast Asia's growth throes. Recently even Peking has implicitly acknowledged that the momentum of reform is irresistible.

Another condition is now becoming clear—to the distress of Indonesians and other Southeast Asians. The United States is gradually disengaging. It is just maintaining its investments, while other investors like Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea move ahead. Above all, Southeast Asia wants the American military to remain—as a counterweight to a rearming Japan or a resurgent China, and to dampen any recrudescence of old intra-regional conflicts. But when volcanic ash piled on Clark Field in the Philippines, Washington declared with extraordinary alacrity that the chief U.S. Air Force base in Asia was no longer serviceable—and pulled out. The same Filipino intransigence that inspired that disgusted retreat also led to the decision to abandon Subic Bay, the chief U.S. Navy base in Asia.

The first practical effect was seen when China, having acquired mid-air refueling technology from Israel, extended its umbrella over the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. Those islands, which could prove rich in undersea petroleum deposits, are also claimed by Malayasia, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

A few years ago, the American response to such a threat to the region's peace would have been, at the least, a strong statement, perhaps an aircraft carrier steaming in the vicinity. But the American ambassador in Manila only said: "The U.S. is clearly going to oppose the use of force."

INDONESIA, already at odds with its southern neighbor, Australia, is nervous as the U.S. gradually retreats. Otherwise, it is booming.

Exports were more than $30 billion last year, while imports were around $26 billion. Per-capita income, though still less than $700, increased 30 per cent from 1988 to 1992. When, eventually, the foreign debt of $66 billion is amortized, the economic situation should be as bright as Indonesia's sunshine.

The only serious cloud is the massacre last year of anti-regime demonstrators by panicky troops on the island of Timor. Disturbed by international condemnation, the administration of President Suharto for the first time ever published a report critical of the army's actions and retired a number of generals. Senior generals concurred. They were disgusted with their juniors' failure to control the demonstrators peacefully and to keep their soldiers in line.

Like several other countries, the Netherlands, which once ruled Indonesia, is still vocally critical. In retaliation, the Indonesians told the Dutch to resign from the presidency of the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia and to dissolve the consortium that last year provided $4.75 billion in aid. The cocky Indonesians believe they can get the money from the World Bank and other international agencies—without lectures from their former overlords.

They almost certainly can. Indonesia is too big and too important to snub.

The fourth most populous nation in the world with 182 million people, it is also the largest Moslem nation, though Islamic fundamentalism is rigorously suppressed. It is rich in resources and lies athwart the sea and air routes from Europe to Asia and Australia.

Despite the notorious corruption of his family, which has seized monopolies on commodities and imports, Suharto is certain to retain his great majority in parliamentary elections this month—and to be re-elected himself next March. He would win even if the army and Golkar (which is not a political party but a coalition of interests) did not control the ballots.

Indonesia exemplifies the new pattern of Asian authoritarianism. Though arbitrary and corrupt by Western standards, Suharto is committed to largely free-market growth, and he is benevolent.

A seaman from the outer islands told me breezily: "He can take what he wants. It all belongs to him anyway!"

A sophisticated middle-class Jakartan observed: "Americans are naïve in talking of an electoral contest. After all, the military hold all the levers of power, even to generals as presidents of major universities. Corruption is getting worse as things get better and the pickings get fatter. But we have stability!" □

A Bitter Pill

MASSIMO CALABRESI

SOFIA, BULGARIA

FIFTEEN minutes outside Sofia, on the lower slopes of Mount Vitosa, squats the Boyana government residence, a hulking, marble-and-glass disfiguration of the architectural meaning of a Roman villa, constructed at the behest of former Bulgarian dictator Todor Zhivkov.

It was here that the heirs to the Eastern European and Soviet intelligence agencies recently gathered with their cold-war adversaries for an international congress of spies. The conference—entitled, didactically, "The Proper Role of an Intelligence Agency in a Democracy"—was co-hosted by the current, democratically elected president of Bulgaria, Zhelyu Zhelev, and the Washington-based Center for Democracy.

The opening session revealed an extraordinary array of powerful men, most of them visibly uncomfortable at their unaccustomed exposure. First among those from the East were the Russian Federation's perspicacious,

Mr. Calabresi, a freelance journalist, is currently based in Moscow.

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somewhat porcine, spymaster, Lieutenant General Vadim A. Kirpichenko, forty-year veteran of the KGB, now serving as deputy head of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service, and Anatoly A. Oleinikov, First Deputy Minister of (internal) Security. They were followed by the Byelorussian and Kazakh former KGB officials who now head the security agencies of those republics, and the deputy head of the equivalent Ukrainian service. Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic had all sent chiefs or deputy chiefs of security. Finally, there were fresh-faced representatives from such newly independent countries as Croatia and Macedonia.

For the West, too, the showing was impressive. The United States was represented by the former Director of Central Intelligence, William Colby, and by the president of the Center for Democracy, Allen Weinstein. The UK was absent, but Germany was represented by Alfred Einweg, Data Protection Commissioner, the man charged with overseeing the files retrieved from the Stasi. France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Canada, Israel, and the Council of Europe were also represented.

Not surprisingly, the early speeches served as platforms for the Eastern services to proclaim their new-found devotion to rule of law and human rights, and to focus on the structural reorganization they had undertaken. Bulgaria had split its service into parts and put the foreign department under the direct control of the president. Transition in Rumania and Poland was taking place within a strict system of executive controls.

This narrow focus gave the impression that several of the Eastern European countries were mistaking restructuring for reform. Evidence that this was the case came when the straightforward Mr. Einweg hauled the reluctant participants into the issue of the appropriate use of the files of the former services.

Einweg was adamant—despite the furor within Germany and elsewhere at the revelations of the extent of the Stasi's crimes—that the files must be made available for the world to learn from. Bulgaria's security chief candidly said he wanted to burn all his country's files as Greece had done after the Colonels. The embarrassed Greek representative said that they had only burned their files after they had received permission from those about whom they had been compiled. The Polish representative said that if they started to bring individuals to justice, then those agents who had been rehired would be vulnerable to blackmail. Weinstein and Colby argued persuasively that the truth had to be told. The Russian representative stayed diligently silent.

The moral high ground, here, was clearly with the West: real reform comes not just from the introduction of strict legal control, but also from the public airing of the past, so that a new sense of what is acceptable is built into the new service. Yet, these ethical conclusions are entangled with practical concerns.

The dignified Catalonian, Santiago Bastos, estimated that it would take at least three years for a service that was starting from scratch to begin efficient intelligence collection. Countries that reform aggressively, making both former and current employees of the services publicly accountable for their past actions, are necessarily more vulnerable to those who would return to dictatorship. Thus, in embracing reform, countries expose themselves to the very anti-democratic forces they are seeking to bring to justice.

Robert Prince

Enter Russia.

As the principal heir to the USSR, and thus to the KGB, Russia is far and away the region's dominant power in the areas of intelligence and security. The approach it takes, therefore, will inevitably be the primary influence on the services of its neighbors.

Throughout the conference both Mr. Oleinikov and General Kirpichenko had maintained a safe distance from the issue of reform versus maintenance of effective security. When pressed in an interview, however, they indicated that their services, having been "depoliticized," were carrying on with their work as usual.

Indeed, there seems to be no question of discarding the enormous asset Russia inherited in the KGB's global intelligence network. Rather it is maintaining or increasing its intelligence presence around the world.

For example, several weeks before the conference, Bulgarian officials had complained about an increase of Russian espionage activity, both in the military-industrial and the political arenas. Similarly, the FBI recently reported that it is seeing the maintenance and in some cases the increase of "a formal intelligence operation directed from Moscow," within the United States. Even as the conference was adopting its final "historic" document and closing with firm handshakes all around, Belgium, which had not sent a delegation, was announcing the expulsion of four Russian embassy officials for spying.

And yet, Russia could not undertake a total overhaul of its intelligence and security services if it wanted to. Neither it, nor the world, could afford for the former Soviet Union's military, and particularly its nuclear, capacity to be poorly protected for three years while it laid down a new ethical foundation. Ironically, Russia's unwillingness or inability (the difference is unimportant) to reform its intelligence and security services may well provide its neighbors with a safer environment in which to do so.

There is no question that Russia's leaders are working to take the country toward a market economy. It is therefore in their interest to see capitalism thrive in the region. Russia might well see a threat to its neigh-

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bors who are following the same market road as a threat to itself, and would therefore provide them with security information.

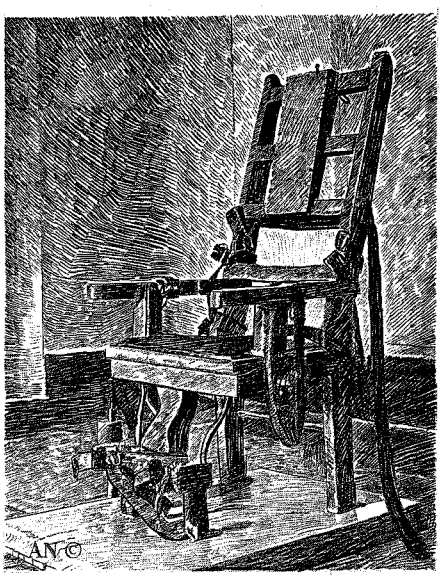
Of course, the loyalty of the Russian spies to their government, and that government's commitment to politically painful reforms, are not guaranteed. It goes without saying that American secrets must be protected with, if anything, heightened vigilance, as the current Director of Central Intelligence, Robert Gates, has urged.

Russia will remain a global contender for some time to come, and the West, accordingly, would be wise to keep its hand on its wallet: first and foremost to make sure it isn't stolen, but also, by means of judicious assistance to Yeltsin's government, to help keep the former KGB under the control of those with comparatively acceptable goals.

And while it is a bitter pill to swallow that the perpetrators of extensive and horrible crimes should go unpunished, the decision in the end lies with the Russian people, against whom the crimes were carried out. They seem to be choking it down. Apparently we must, too. □

Death Penalty Poster Boy

THOMAS HARVEY HOLT



Alan Nahigian

RICHMOND

"LIVE FROM Virginia, it's execution night!" So might an announcer have introduced the ghoulish media circus outside the Greensville Correctional Center on May 20, where no fewer than 14 satellite trucks and 50 cameras awaited the execution of Roger Keith Coleman for the rape and murder of his sister-in-law, Wanda Fay McCoy, 11 years ago. The evening featured numerous television news breaks with "the latest" on Coleman's pending execution, coincidentally scheduled for the top of the 11 o'clock news hour. A lie-detector test earlier in the day (which Coleman failed) and a 15-minute stay of execution from the U.S. Supreme Court at 10:59 P.M. to consider his frivolous, last-minute appeal, added to the media drama.

Execution night marked the culmination of what *Time* magazine called "a canny campaign to draw media attention to Coleman's case," waged by 28-year-old Kathleen "Kitty" Behan of Arnold & Porter, a high-powered Washington law and lobbying firm. The campaign was enormously successful. The gist of most of the national coverage: The state of Virginia was going to fry an innocent man because procedural rules barred the admission of supposedly exculpatory "new evidence." *Time*, which put Coleman on its cover, was one of the many news organizations to take up his cause. In his final days, Coleman asserted his innocence in nonstop television and print interviews. Governor Wilder's office was flooded with thousands of clemency pleas; on the day of the execution, his office's phone lines were jammed with calls prompted by a Coleman interview on the *Phil Donahue Show*.

The callers and letter writers could hardly be blamed for thinking that Governor Wilder had sent an innocent man to "Old Sparky." Outside of the local print media, most reports carefully avoided the key evidence against Coleman while presenting the defense's boldest assertions as virtually uncontroverted fact.

Brad McCoy arrived home from work on schedule at about 11:15 P.M. on the night of the murder. He found his dead, nearly beheaded wife on the floor of a bedroom to which she had been dragged from near the front door, her sweater and bra pulled over her head and her panties around her left ankle. She still was oozing blood.

The crime frightened the 1,300 people of Grundy, deep in southwest Virginia's coal country. But there was no sign of forced entry, which immediately led police to believe Wanda McCoy knew her killer. Coleman, who had a prior conviction for attempted rape, was a prime suspect. Among the key evidence:

—Two pubic hairs found on Mrs. McCoy matched Coleman's in every significant respect.

—Type O blood—the same as Mrs. McCoy's—was found on a pair of jeans Coleman surrendered to police on the day following the murder.

—Witnesses placed Coleman a few minutes' drive from the crime scene within an hour of the murder.

—Roger Matney, who shared a cellblock with Coleman after his arrest, testified that Coleman told him that he had raped Mrs. McCoy. He drew a diagram of the crime scene for police, including the location of a paper towel Mrs. McCoy had used as a makeshift panty-liner. Only the murderer could have known that detail, because it had been kept secret (police use this technique to screen false confessions).

—The rapist-murderer had Type B blood, and he was a "secretor"—one whose blood type can be determined from bodily fluids, such as sperm. Less than 10 per cent of the general population are Type B secretors. Roger Coleman is among them.

It was a strong case. And it got stronger in the course of Coleman's dozen appeals. Over the objections of prosecutors, Miss Behan's predecessors at Arnold & Porter got permission in 1990 to perform a "PCR-DNA" genotyping test (it finds DNA alleles; everyone has a pair) on the sperm found in Mrs. McCoy. Dr. Edward Blake, a forensic scientist described by Coleman's lawyers as "a highly regarded expert" with "particular expertise in the PCR Amplification Test and the interpretation of semen evidence in sexual assault cases," did the testing. It backfired: Mrs. McCoy's attacker had alleles of (1.3, 2). Only 2 per cent of the population, Coleman among them, have those genetic char-

Mr. Holt is assistant editorial-page editor of the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

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acteristics. Thus the blood typing and PCR testing put Coleman among the tiny fraction of the population who have the same genetic traits as the person who murdered Wanda McCoy.

Miss Behan countered this massive evidence with a blunderbuss. She openly accused another man of the murder on the basis of his alleged "confessions" to third parties—even though the man is of the wrong blood type. Miss Behan even attacked Dr. Blake's testing.

Coleman gained public sympathy in large part because one of his appeals—which eventually reached the Supreme Court—was denied because he filed it a day late. In fact, a state court and a federal district court did examine his evidentiary claims on appeal and found them wanting.

Indeed, when U.S. District Judge Glen Williams rejected Coleman's appeal on May 12, he found "the case against Coleman as strong or stronger than the evidence advanced at trial."

This case offers a cautionary tale about journalistic standards and about the political pressures involved in capital cases. If I and other local journalists, such as my colleagues at the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* and *News Leader* and reporters at the much smaller *Bristol Herald* and (Grundy) *Virginia Mountaineer*, could get the facts, certainly national news organizations could do so. The only logical explanation for why much of the media were snookered by Arnold & Porter's public-relations campaign is that they wanted to be snookered.

Death-row appeals today are conducted as much in the press as in the courts. Repeated often enough in the media, defense assertions become the truth in voters' eyes. And no official wants to be known as the fellow who sent an innocent man to the electric chair. Equally disturbing, in those rare cases where clemency may be warranted, such an atmosphere leaves governors looking as if they have done the politically expedient thing even when they have done the right thing.

Sadly, this melodrama is likely to be repeated as soon as the next convicted murderer nears a long-awaited execution date. It seems strangely appropriate that Roger Coleman left behind a lengthy diary in the hope that it could be turned into a book or movie. □

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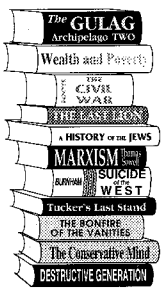

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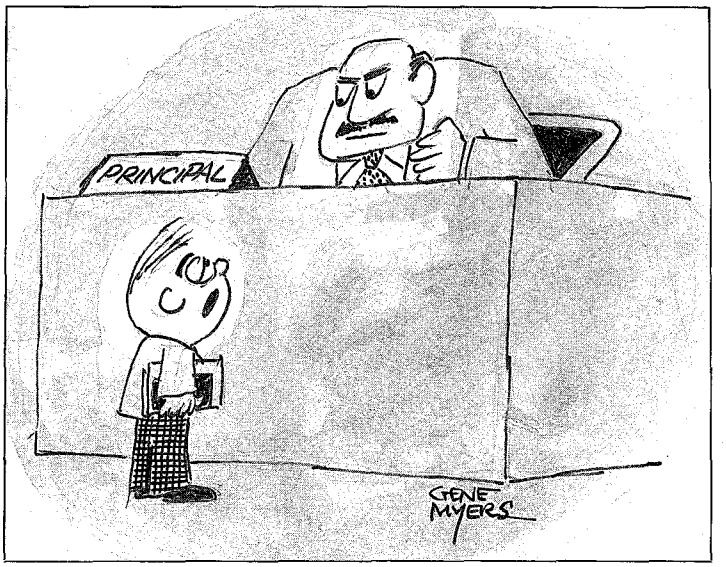
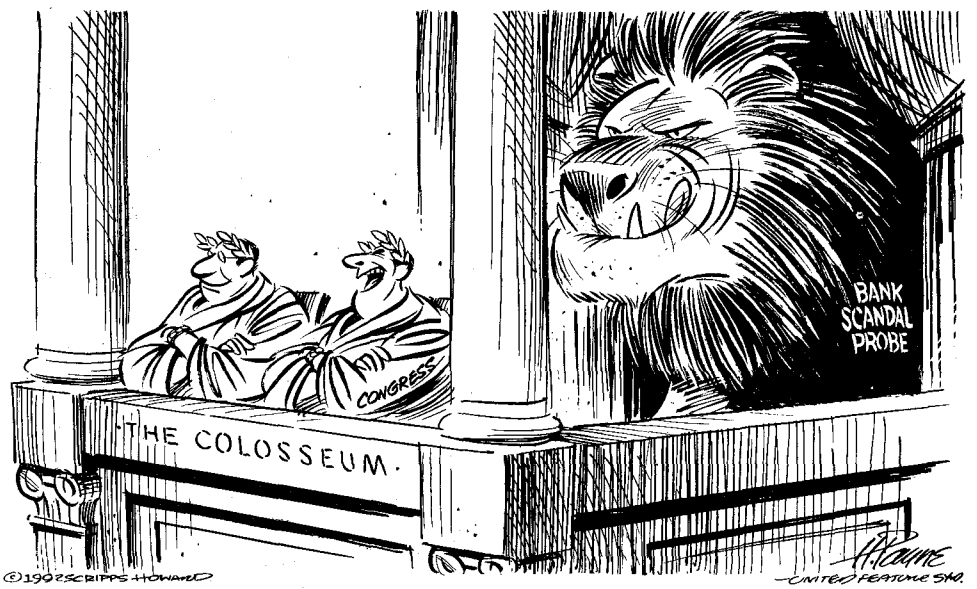


"My teacher caught me praying!"

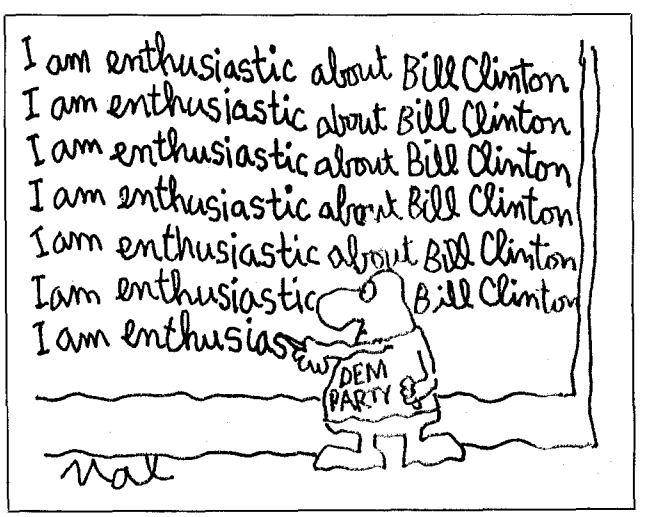


"SO, WHO GETS FED TO THE SPECIAL COUNSEL TODAY? JOHN POINDEXTER? DEBORAH GORE DEAN? ELLIOTT ABRAMS? HAR! HAR!..."

Folk Ways

My village, like a sleepy tortoise, blinks,
Bewildered by the sudden summer cries
Of tourists in pursuit and, trembling, shrinks
And wishes it were half its tiny size—
In June, that is. By August, coffers filling
With guidebook gold, it's rather more than willing
To play the game and murmur no complaint.
There's not another village quite as "quaint."

MAUREEN CANNON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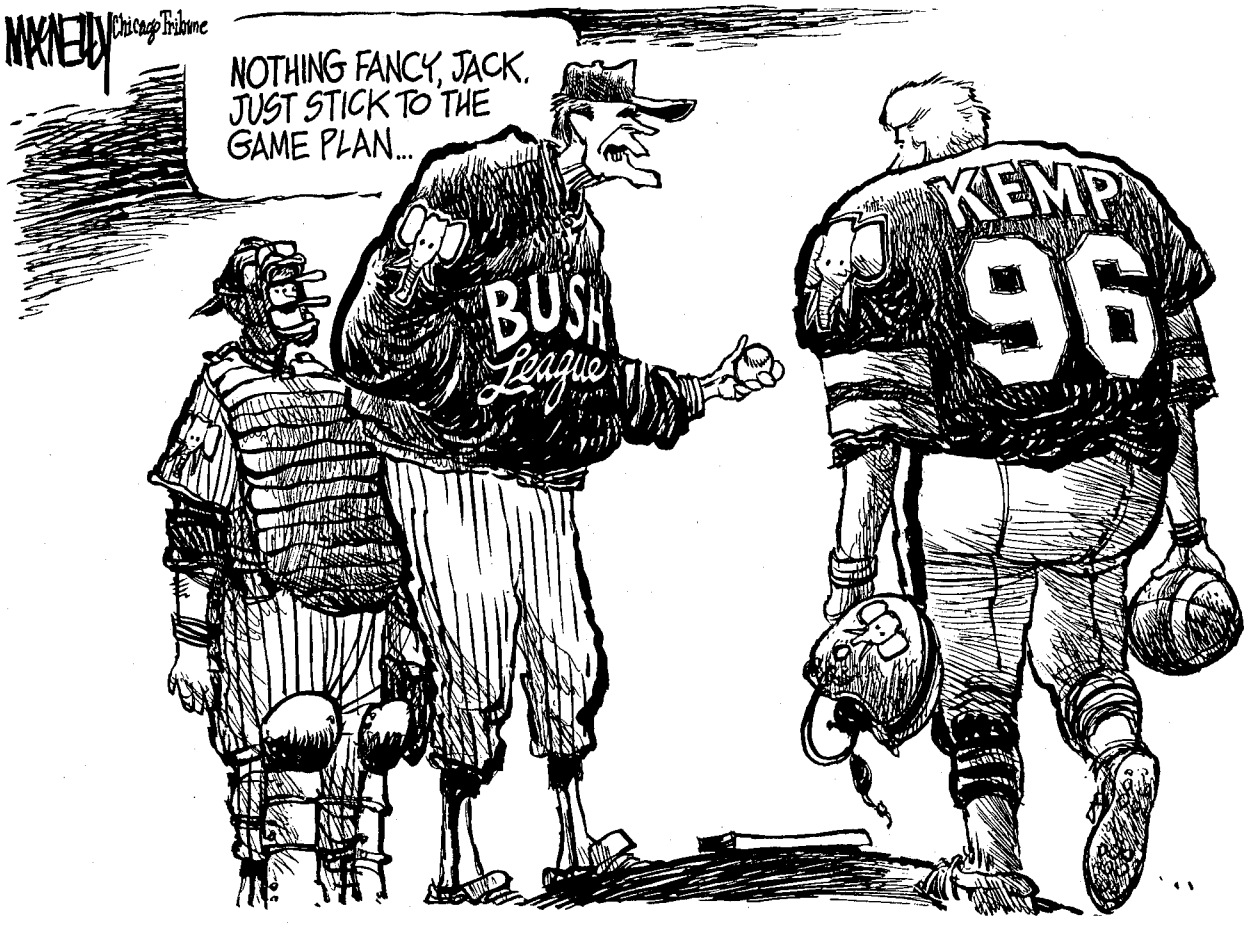

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The American Nation

TIME TO RETHINK IMMIGRATION?

America is a nation of immigrants, yes—but so are all nations. The question is whether we have given up on turning our immigrants into Americans.

PETER BRIMELOW

DANTE would have been delighted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service waiting rooms. They would have provided him with a tenth Circle of Hell. There is something distinctly infernal about the spectacle of so many lost souls waiting around so hopelessly, mutually incomprehensible in virtually every language under the sun, each clutching a number from one of those ticket-issuing machines which may or may not be honored by the INS clerks before the end of the Civil Service working day.

The danger of damnation is perhaps low—although a Scottish friend of mine once found himself flung into the deportation holding tank because the INS misunderstood its own rules. And toward the end of my own ten-year trek through the system, I whiled away a lot of time watching confrontations between suspicious INSers and agitated Iranians, apparently hauled in because the Iran hostage crisis had inspired the Carter Administration to ask how many of them were enrolled in U.S. universities. (The INS was unable to provide an answer during the 444 days of the hostage crisis—or, as it turned out, at all.)

Nevertheless, you can still get a pretty good blast of brimstone if you dare suggest that it might be another of those misunderstandings when, having finally reached the head of the line, you are ordered by the clerk to go away and come back another day with a previously unmentioned Form XYZ.

Your fellow huddled masses accept this treatment with a horrible passivity. Perhaps it is imbued in them by eons of arbitrary government in their native lands. Only rarely is there a flurry of protest. At its center, almost invariably, is an indignant American spouse.

Just as New York City's government can't stop muggers but does a great job ticketing young women on Park Avenue for failing to scoop up after their lapdogs, current U.S. immigration policy in effect enforces the law only against those who obey it. Annual legal immigration of some 950,000—counting the 140,000 refugees and the 100,000 granted political asylum—is overwhelmed by the 2 to 3 million illegal entries into the country every year, which result in a net annual increase of perhaps 250,000 illegal aliens. (A cautious estimate—again, no one really knows.)

The INS bureaucracy still grinds through its rituals. But meanwhile the U.S. has lost control of its borders. As it turned out, I could have avoided my INS decade by the simple expedient of staying here after I graduated from Stanford in 1972 and waiting to be amnestied, along with some 3.2 million other illegal immigrants, by the 1986 Immigration Act.

There is another parallel with New York: Just as when you leave Park Avenue and descend into the subway, on entering the INS waiting rooms you find yourself in an underworld that is almost entirely colored. In 1990, for example, only 8 per cent of 1.5 million legal immigrants, including amnestied illegals, came from Europe. (And a good few of those were on-migrants from Asia or the Caribbean.)

Only the incurious could fail to wonder: Where do all these people get off and come to the surface? That is: What impact will they have on America?

Where Will They Surface?

AMERICAN LIBERALS, of course, are determinedly, even devoutly, incurious about this subject. You quickly learn not to raise such matters with them at all.

The silence of American conservatives has a more

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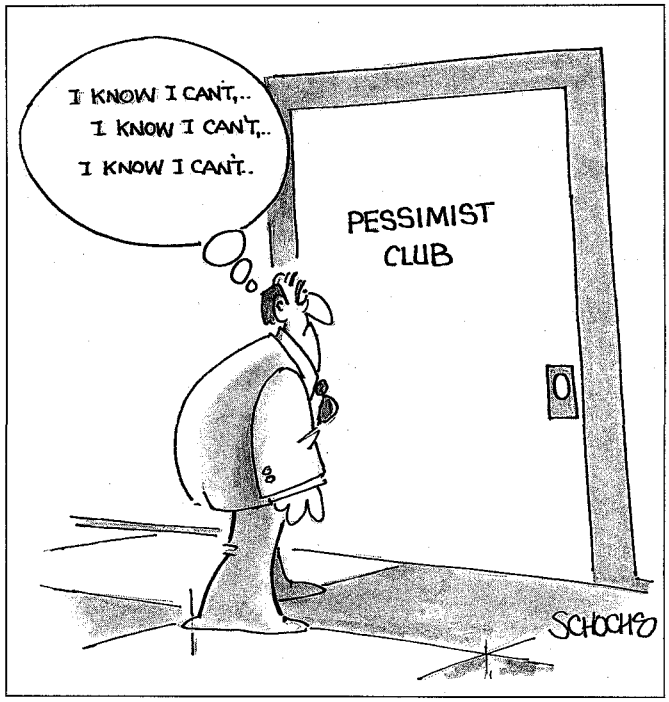
complex cause. To a significant degree, it's due to sheer ignorance. In the early 1970s, a battle-scarred Goldwater veteran brushed aside my news from the INS waiting rooms. The U.S., he said, was far too big for immigration to have any but the most marginal effect. When later I showed him a news report that the inflow from the former British West Indies had quintupled during the previous decade, he was astonished. (These numbers add up. By 1973, over 220,000 West Indians lived in the New York area alone. And it was just the beginning. The number of Jamaicans immigrating to the U.S. between 1951 and 1980 amounted to more than a tenth of the island's population. By 1990, almost another tenth of Jamaica had arrived in the U.S., the highest proportion from any country in the world.)

Very few people can absorb new realities after the age of 21. And conservative leaders now in their fifties spent their formative years in one of the greatest lulls in the history of American immigration—the result of restrictive quota legislation designed to favor Northern Europeans in the 1920s, followed by the Depression and World War II. Amazingly, only about 500,000 legal immigrants entered the U.S. in the whole of the 1930s. (In those days, there was virtually no illegal immigration.) And only about a million entered in the 1940s—including World War II refugees. By contrast, of course, the U.S. accepted over 1.5 million immigrants, counting only legals, in the single year of 1990 alone.



The Great Immigration Lull was ended dramatically by the 1965 Immigration Act. Typical of so many Great Society reforms, it was passed amid much moralizing rhetoric and promptly had exactly the opposite of its advertised effect.

U.S. immigration policy was not transformed without debate. There was a debate. It just bore no relationship to what subsequently happened. In particular, staunch defenders of the national-origins quota system, like the American Legion, allowed themselves to be persuaded that the new legislation really enacted a sort of worldwide quota, no longer skewed toward Northern Europe—a policy easily caricatured as "racist" in the era of the civil-rights movement—but still restricting overall immigration to the then-current level of around 300,000. (A detailed account of Congress's deluded intent and the dramatic consequences appears in Lawrence Auster's devastating *The Path to National Suicide: An Essay on Immigration and Multiculturalism*, published by AICF*.)

Today, it is astonishing to read the categorical assurances given by supporters of the 1965 Immigration Act. *"What the bill will not do,"* summarized Immigration Subcommittee chairman Senator Edward Kennedy:

> First, our cities will not be flooded with a million immigrants annually. Under the proposed bill, the present level of immigration remains substantially the same . . . Secondly, the ethnic mix will not be upset . . . Contrary to the charges in some quarters, [the bill] will not inundate America with immigrants from any one country or area, or the most populated and deprived nations of Africa and Asia . . .

Every one of these assurances has proved false. Immigration levels *did* surge upward—they *are* now running at a million a year. Immigrants *do* come predominantly from one sort of area—85 per cent of the 11.8 million legal immigrants arriving in the U.S. between 1971 and 1990 were from the Third World, 44 per cent from Latin America and the Caribbean, 36 per cent from Asia—*and* from one country: 20 per cent from Mexico. And about 33,000 Africans arrived in 1990, which looks small only by comparison.

Above all, the American ethnic mix *has* been upset. In 1960, the U.S. population was 88.6 per cent white; in 1990, it was only 75.6 per cent white—a drop of 13 percentage points in thirty years. (Indeed, the proportion of "European-Americans" is probably a couple of percentage points lower than that, because the Census Bureau counts all Middle Easterners as "white.") The demographer Leon Bouvier has projected that by 2020—that is, easily within the lifetimes of many NATIONAL REVIEW readers—the proportion of whites could fall as low as 61 per cent. Among children under 15, minorities could be approaching the point of becoming the majority.

These projections put into context the common claim that—as Professor Julian Simon put it in *The Economic Consequences of Immigration* (1990), a book that has been widely accepted by conservatives as their bible on the subject—"contemporary immigration is not high by U.S. historical standards." In fact, immigration is high, in terms of absolute numbers, by comparison with all but the peak decade of 1901–10, when about 8.7 million immigrants arrived, part of the great wave from South-

Mr. Brimelow is a Senior Editor at Forbes.

*The American Immigration Control Foundation, P. O. Box 525, Monterey, Va. 24465; price: $3 for a single copy; $2 apiece for two or more.

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ern and Eastern Europe. And counting illegals, the 1981–90 decade probably matched and may have exceeded that total. Furthermore, this latest wave shows no sign of receding. Nor, given the Third World's demographic structure, is there any particular reason to suppose it will.

Of course, immigration is lower in relative terms than in the first decade of the twentieth century—the total U.S. population at that time was less than a third of today's. However, this was not a proportion that could extend indefinitely. Immigration has never been *relatively* higher than when the second Pilgrim Father came down the gangplank, increasing the Plymouth Colony's population by 100 per cent. As it is, the U.S. takes half of all the emigrants in the world.

But it also is crucial to note a point always omitted in pro-immigration polemics: in 1900, the U.S. birthrate was much higher than today. American Anglos' birthrates, for example, are now below replacement levels. So immigrants have proportionately more demographic impact. By the early 1980s, immigration was running at the equivalent of about 16 per cent of native births—including births to immigrants—and rising. This is eminently comparable to the 19.9 per cent of 1901–10. Hence the steadily shifting ethnic balance.

"The government should dissolve the people and elect another one," quipped the Communist playwright Bertolt Brecht after the East German riots of 1953. For good or ill, the U.S. political elite seems to be acting on his advice.

Immigration Sleight of Hand

PERHAPS BECAUSE the 1965 Immigration Act was slipped through in such a deceptive way, many Americans, and many conservatives, just do not realize that it is directly responsible for this transformation of their country. They tend to assume that a kind of natural phenomenon is at work—that Hispanics, for example, increased from 4.5 per cent of the U.S. population in 1970 to 9 per cent in 1990 because they somehow started sprouting out of the earth like spring corn.

But no natural process is at work. The current wave of immigration, and America's shifting ethnic balance, is simply the result of public policy. A change in public policy opened the Third World floodgates after 1965. A further change in public policy could shut them. Public policy could even restore the *status quo ante* 1965, which would slowly shift the ethnic balance back.

It's often said that Europeans no longer want to emigrate. But in fact the 1965 Act cut back a continuing flow: the number of British immigrants, for example, had been running at around 28,000 a year and was immediately reduced by about half. Along with other Europeans, the British seem simply to have been diverted to the countries that compete with the U.S. for skilled immigrants: above all Australia and Canada.

And all such dogmatic assertions about immigration are dangerous. Witness the sudden influx of more than 100,000 illegal Irish immigrants in the late 1980s—and the wholly unexpected unfreezing of a sea of potential immigrants from Eastern Europe in the early 1990s.

Since 1965, moreover, U.S. public policy has in effect actively discriminated against Europeans. This is because, in another reversal, the 1965 Act placed a higher priority on "family reunification" than on admitting immigrants with skills. And "reunification" meant relatives no matter how remote. So the new immigrants arriving from countries that had not been traditional sources were able to sponsor so many additional immigrants that they crowded out European applicants with skills but no family connections from the "overall quota"—before spilling over into the special category of admissions outside the "overall quota," which turned out to be vastly larger than predicted.

As a result, the post-1965 immigration is not only much bigger than expected: it is also less skilled. And it is becoming even less so—one economist, Professor George J. Borjas, himself a Cuban immigrant, has gone so far as to say, in his 1990 *Friends or Strangers: The Impact of Immigrants on the U.S. Economy*, that "the skill level of successive immigrant waves admitted to the U.S. has declined precipitously in the past two or three decades." For example, in 1986 less than 4 per cent of the over 600,000 legal immigrants were admitted on the basis of skills.

Paradoxically, Borjas says, the U.S. attracts disproportionate numbers of unskilled people from Third World countries because the income distribution there is so unequal. The poor have the most to gain. Conversely, it is skilled workers who have the most to gain by leaving egalitarian Western Europe—if they could get in here.

Some more skilled immigrants will be coming to America as a result of legislation in 1990, which—initially as a result of pressure from Irish groups—increased the skill quota by rather less than 100,000. But the price of this, extracted by other, post-1965 ethnic lobbies, was a substantial overall increase in family-reunification immigration.

Come, All Ye Huddled Masses

JUST AS conservatives tend to think immigration is a natural phenomenon, they also assume vaguely that it must have been ratified by some free-market process. But immigration to the U.S. is not determined by economics: it is determined—or at least profoundly distorted—by public policy. Inevitably, there are mismatches between skills supplied and skills demanded. Which helps explain why—as Borjas demonstrated in *Friends or Strangers*—welfare participation and poverty rates are sharply higher among the post-1965 immigrants, with some groups, such as Dominicans and other Hispanics, approaching the levels of American-born blacks.

Borjas's findings, although well understood among specialists, will be surprising to many conservatives. They contrast sharply with some of Julian Simon's

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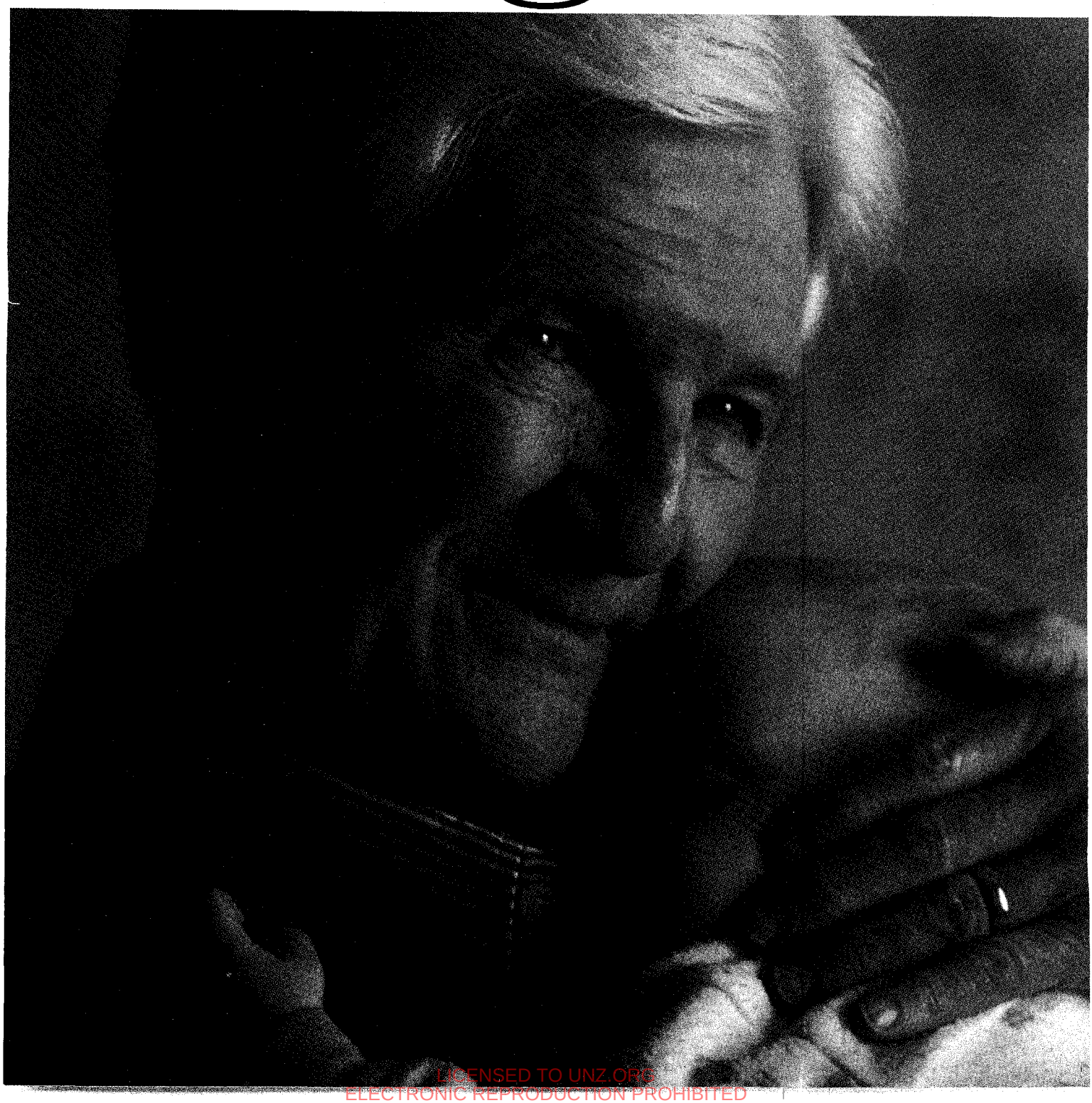

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The climax of William F. Buckley's classic quartet.

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The End of the Affair

William F. Buckley, Jr.

With photographs by Christopher Little

RANDOM HOUSE

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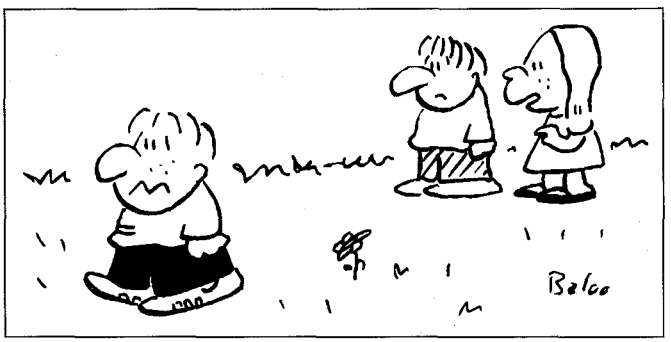
more familiar conclusions. The basic reason: Simon's data were old, reflecting earlier, more traditional immigrant groups—another danger in this rapidly changing area.

Such is the grip of the American elite's pro-immigration consensus, however, that book reviewers simply assumed Borjas must be pro-immigration too. They failed to pick up what he described as his "worrisome" evidence that problems were developing with the post-1965 immigrant flow. Thus *Business Week*'s Michael J. Mandel reviewed both Borjas's and Simon's books under the drum-beating heading "DOES AMERICA NEED MORE 'HUDDLED MASSES'? YES." Possibly provoked by such total misreadings, Borjas the following year spelled out his position in the preface to his paperback edition:

> it is almost certain that during the 1990s *new immigrants will make up at least a third of all new labor market entrants.* In view of the available empirical evidence, there is *no economic rationale* to justify this huge increase in the size of the foreign-born population. [Italics added!]

On close examination, at least some pro-immigration enthusiasts turn out to be perfectly well aware that current policy is deeply flawed. Ben J. Wattenberg has popularized the idea that the U.S. can become "The First Universal Nation," as his 1991 book is titled, drawing its population from every corner of the globe. This romantic vision has entranced quite a few conservatives. But they don't seem to have noticed that in that book, Wattenberg actually calls for "designer immigration"—radically reoriented toward skills rather than family reunification, keeping out illegals and ending what he describes as the "odd situation" whereby Europeans are effectively discriminated against. Of course, he hastens to add, this will not cut back on Third World immigrants as such. (Wattenberg tells me that the 1990 Act was merely "a good solid half-step forward" and that he "still advocates designer immigration.")



"He's in real *trouble this time—I heard that the principal appointed a special prosecutor."*

'A Nation of Immigrants'

EVERYONE HAS seen a speeded-up film of the cloudscape. What appears to the naked eye to be a panorama of almost immobile grandeur writhes into wild life. Vast patterns of soaring, swooping movement are suddenly discernible. Great towering cumulo-nimbus formations boil up out of nowhere, dominating the sky in a way that would be terrifying if it were not, in real life, so gradual that we are barely aware that anything is going on.

This is a perfect metaphor for the development of the American nation. America, of course, is exceptional. What is exceptional about it, however, is not the way in which it was created, but the speed.

"We are a nation of immigrants." No discussion of U.S. immigration policy gets far without someone making this helpful remark. As an immigrant myself, I always pause respectfully. You never know. Maybe this is what they're taught to chant in schools nowadays, a sort of multicultural Pledge of Allegiance.

But it secretly amuses me. Do they really think other nations sprouted up out of the ground? ("Autochthonous" is the classical Greek word.) The truth is that *all* nations are nations of immigrants. But the process is usually so slow and historic that people overlook it. They mistake for mountains what are merely clouds.

This is obvious in the case of the British Isles, from which the largest single proportion of Americans are still derived. You can see it in the place-names. Within a few miles of my parents' home in the north of England, the names are Roman (Chester, derived from the Latin for camp), Saxon (anything ending in *-ton*, town, like Oxton), Viking (*-by*, farm, like Irby), and Norman French (Delamere). At times, these successive waves of peoples were clearly living cheek by jowl. Thus among these place-names is Wallesey, Anglo-Saxon for "Island of the Welsh"—Welsh being derived from the word used by low-German speakers for foreigners wherever they met them, from Wallonia to Wallachia. This corner of the English coast continued as home to some of the pre-Roman Celtic stock, not all of whom were driven west into Wales proper as was once supposed.

The English language that America speaks today (or at least spoke until the post-1965 fashion for bilingual education) reflects the fact that the peoples of Britain merged, eventually; their separate contributions can still be traced in it. Every nation in Europe went through the same process. Even the famously homogeneous Japanese show the signs of ethnically distinct waves of prehistoric immigration.

But merging takes time. After the Norman Conquest in 1066, it was nearly three hundred years before the invaders were assimilated to the point where court proceedings in London were again heard in English. And it was nearly nine centuries before there was any further large-scale immigration into the British Isles—the Caribbean and Asian influx after World War II.

Except in America. Here the process of merging has been uniquely rapid. Thus about 7 million Germans have immigrated to the U.S. since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Their influence has been profound—to my British eye it accounts for the odd American habit of getting up in the morning and starting work. About 50 million Americans told the 1980 Census

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that they were wholly or partly of German descent. But only 1.6 million spoke German in their homes.

What Is a Nation?

SO ALL NATIONS are made up of immigrants. But what is a nation—the end-product of all this merging? This brings us into a territory where words are weapons, exactly as George Orwell pointed out years ago. "Nation"—as suggested by its Latin root *nascere*, to be born—intrinsically implies a link by blood. A nation is an extended family. The merging process through which all nations pass is not merely cultural, but to a considerable extent biological, through intermarriage.

Liberal commentators, for various reasons, find this deeply distressing. They regularly denounce appeals to common ethnicity as "nativism" or "tribalism." Ironically, when I studied African history in college, my politically correct tutor deprecated any reference to "tribes." These small, primitive, and incoherent groupings should, he said, be dignified as "nations." Which suggests a useful definition: tribalism/nativism is nationalism of which liberals disapprove.

American political debate on this point is hampered by a peculiar difficulty. American editors are convinced that the term "state" will confuse readers unless reserved exclusively for the component parts of the United States—New York, California, etc. So when talking about sovereign political structures, where the British would use "state," the Germans "*Staat*," and the French "*l'état*," journalists here are compelled to use the word "nation." Thus in the late 1980s it was common to see references to "the nation of Yugoslavia," when Yugoslavia's problem was precisely that it was not a nation at all, but a state that contained several different small but fierce nations—Croats, Serbs etc. (In my constructive way, I've been trying to introduce, as an alternative to "state," the word "polity"—defined by Webster as "a politically organized unit." But it's quite hopeless. Editors always confuse it with "policy.")

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"Remember our motto, Hartly: If at first you don't succeed, you're fired!"

This definitional difficulty explains one of the regular entertainments of U.S. politics: uproar because someone has unguardedly described America as a "Christian nation." Of course, in the sense that the vast majority of Americans are Christians, this is nothing less than the plain truth. It is not in the least incompatible with a secular *state* (polity).

But the difficulty over the N-word has a more serious consequence: it means that American commentators are losing sight of the concept of the "nation-state"—a sovereign structure that is the political expression of a specific ethno-cultural group. Yet the nation-state was one of the crucial inventions of the modern age. Mass literacy, education, and mobility put a premium on the unifying effect of cultural and ethnic homogeneity. None of the great pre-modern multinational empires have survived. (The Brussels bureaucracy may be trying to create another, but it has a long way to go.)

This is why Ben Wattenberg is able to get away with talking about a "Universal Nation." On its face, this is a contradiction in terms. It's possible, as Wattenberg variously implies, that he means the diverse immigrant groups will eventually intermarry, producing what he calls, quoting the English poet John Masefield, a "wondrous race." Or that they will at least be assimilated by American culture, which, while globally dominant, is hardly "universal." But meanwhile there are hard questions. What language is this "universal nation" going to speak? How is it going to avoid ethnic strife? dual loyalties? collapsing like the Tower of Babel? Wattenberg is not asked to reconcile these questions, although he is not unaware of them, because in American political discourse the ideal of an American nation-state is in eclipse.

Ironically, the same weaknesses were apparent in the rather similar concept of "cultural pluralism" invented by Horace M. Kallen at the height of the last great immigration debate, before the Quota Acts of the 1920s. Kallen, like many of today's pro-immigration enthusiasts, reacted emotionally against the calls for "Americanization" that the 1880-to-1920 immigrant wave provoked. He argued that any unitary American nationality had already been dissipated by immigration (sound familiar?). Instead, he said, the U.S. had become merely a political state (polity) containing a number of different nationalities.

Kallen left the practical implications of this vision "woefully undeveloped" (in the words of the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*). It eventually evolved into a vague approval of tolerance, which was basically how Americans had always treated immigrant groups anyway—an extension, not coincidentally, of how the English built the British nation.

But in one respect, Kallenism is very much alive: he argued that authentic Americanism was what he called "the American Idea." This amounted to an almost religious idealization of "democracy," which again was left undeveloped but which appeared to have as much to do

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with non-discrimination and equal protection under the law as with elections. Today, a messianic concern for global "democracy" is being suggested to conservatives as an appropriate objective for U.S. foreign policy.

And Kallenism underlies the second helpful remark that someone always makes in any discussion of U.S. immigration policy: *"America isn't a nation like the other nations—it's an idea."*

Once more, this American exceptionalism is really more a matter of degree than of kind. Many other nations have some sort of ideational reinforcement. Quite often it is religious, such as Poland's Roman Catholicism; sometimes cultural, such as France's ineffable Frenchness. And occasionally it is political. Thus—again not coincidentally—the English used to talk about what might be described as the "English Idea": English liberties, their rights as Englishmen, and so on. Americans used to know immediately what this meant. As Jesse Chickering wrote in 1848 of his diverse fellow-Americans: "English laws and institutions, adapted to the circumstances of the country, have been adopted here . . . The tendency of things is to mold the whole into one people, whose leading characteristics are English, formed on American soil."

> What language is this 'universal nation' going to speak? How is it going to avoid ethnic strife? dual loyalties? collapsing like the Tower of Babel?

What is unusual in the present debate, however, is that Americans are now being urged to abandon the bonds of a common ethnicity and instead to trust entirely to ideology to hold together their state (polity). This is an extraordinary experiment, like suddenly replacing all the blood in a patient's body. History suggests little reason to suppose it will succeed. Christendom and Islam have long ago been sundered by national quarrels. More recently, the much-touted "Soviet Man," the creation of much tougher ideologists using much rougher methods than anything yet seen in the U.S., has turned out to be a Russian, Ukrainian, or Kazakh after all.

Which is why Shakespeare has King Henry V say, before the battle of Agincourt, not "we defenders of international law and the dynastic principle as it applies to my right to inherit the throne of France," but

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.

However, although intellectuals may have decided that America is not a nation but an idea, the news has not reached the American people—especially that significant minority who sternly tell the Census Bureau their ethnicity is "American." (They seem mostly to be of British origin, many generations back.) And it would have been considered absurd throughout most of American history.

John Jay in *The Federalist Papers* wrote that Americans were "one united people, a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs." Some hundred years later, Theodore Roosevelt in his *Winning of the West* traced the "perfectly continuous history" of the Anglo-Saxons from King Alfred to George Washington. He presented the settling of the lands beyond the Alleghenies as "the crowning and greatest achievement" of "the spread of the English-speaking peoples," which—though personally a liberal on racial matters—he saw in explicit terms: "it is of incalculable importance that America, Australia, and Siberia should pass out of the hands of their red, black, and yellow aboriginal owners, and become the heritage of the dominant world races."

Roosevelt himself was an example of ethnicities merging to produce this new nation. He thanked God—he teased his friend Rudyard Kipling—that there was "not a drop of British blood" in him. But that did not stop him from identifying with Anglo-Saxons or from becoming a passionate advocate of an assimilationist Americanism, which crossed ethnic lines and was ultimately to cross racial lines.

And it is important to note that, at the height of the last great immigration wave, Kallen and his allies totally failed to persuade Americans that they were no longer a nation. Quite the contrary: once convinced that their nationhood was threatened by continued massive immigration, Americans changed the public policies that made it possible. While the national-origins quotas were being legislated, President Calvin Coolidge put it unflinchingly: "America must be kept American."

Everyone knew what he meant.

'Pulling Up the Ladder'

ANOTHER of those helpful lines exactly describes what Americans did in the 1920s: *"Pulling up the ladder."* But pulling up the ladder may be necessary—if the lifeboat is about to capsize.

And the American lifeboat undeniably did stabilize after the 1920s. It took time. As late as 1963, when Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan published *Beyond the Melting Pot*, the ethnic groups that had arrived in the 1880-to-1920 wave appeared not to be assimilating into the American mainstream. At best, as Will Herberg argued in *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, there was a "triple melting pot" working within the major religious communities—for example, Irish Catholics marrying Italian Catholics; German Jews marrying Russian Jews.

But then, just when the media–academic complex had tooled up an entire industry based on the "unmeltable ethnics," they started to melt. The figures are dramatic. According to Robert C. Christopher in his 1989

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Crashing the Gates: The De-Wasping of America's Power Elite, half of all Italian-Americans born since World War II married non-Catholics, mainly Protestants; some 40 per cent of Jews marrying in the 1980s chose Gentile spouses, a phenomenon rare if not unknown only twenty years earlier.

Christopher, a former *Newsweek* writer and political liberal, naturally saw this development as an emerging cultural synthesis free (at last!) of any nasty ethnic connotations at all. But there is a simpler interpretation: the American nation was just swallowing, and then digesting—Wasping, to adapt Christopher's terminology—an unusually large and spicy immigrant meal.

This pattern of swallowing and digesting has recurred throughout American history. Waves of immigration have been followed by lulls right back into colonial times. After the turmoil of the Revolutionary War, there was a Great Lull remarkably similar to the one earlier this century. For nearly fifty years, there was practically no immigration at all. The U.S. grew rapidly through natural increase. But the make-up of the white population remained about what it had been in the 1790 Census: largely (60 per cent) English, heavily (80 per cent) British, and overwhelmingly (98 per cent) Protestant. This was the nation Alexis de Tocqueville described in *Democracy in America* (1835)—an irony, since his name has now been adopted by Gregory Fossedal's pro-immigration lobby. That Tocqueville's analysis still has relevance is a tribute to that nation's powers of assimilation and cultural transmission.

Thereafter, immigration relative to U.S. population peaked about every fifteen or twenty years: in 1851–54, 1866–73, 1881–83, 1905–07, and 1921–24. In between it plunged, by as much as three-quarters or more. And the ethnic composition continuously changed. Earlier in the century, the largest element was Irish; in the middle, German; by the end, from Southern and Eastern Europe. After 1924, immigration was reduced to a trickle—but that trickle was from Northern and Western Europe. These variations in the magnitude and make-up of immigration were vital to the process of digestion.

And this pattern of variation puts a different perspective on the immigration debate. For example, it is conventional to dismiss all concerns about immigration with the argument that such fears have proved groundless in the past. Of course, this is illogical. Just because a danger has been averted in the past does not mean it cannot happen in the future. Many passengers might have climbed aboard the lifeboat safely; one more may still capsize it.

But in fact these concerns, which have been expressed by the most eminent Americans going right back to colonial times, were perfectly reasonable. They were rendered moot only by changing circumstances. Thus Benjamin Franklin worried about German immigration in 1751: "Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a Colony of *Aliens*, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them . . . ?" Franklin was not proved wrong: instead, German immigration was halted—in the short run, by the Seven Years' War (1756–63); in the longer run, by the post-Revolution Great Lull.

Similarly, the nativist anti-Catholic "Know-Nothing" insurrection, which had seized six state governments and elected 75 congressmen by 1855, was the reaction, harsh but human, of a Protestant nation that had forgotten immigration to its apparently imminent inundation by Irish Catholics fleeing the 1846 potato famine. Subsequently, Know-Nothingism receded, partly because of the Civil War, but also because the supply of Irish Catholics turned out to be finite after all. The Irish made up nearly half of the 1851–54 wave. They were perhaps a fifth or less of the subsequent trough.

The public policies that excluded Asian immigration for nearly a hundred years also appear rather different in this historical perspective. The California Legislature's 1876 report on immigration complained that the Chinese "have never adapted themselves to our habits, mode of dress, or our educational system . . . Impregnable to all the influences of our Anglo-Saxon life, they remain the same stolid Asiatics that have floated on the rivers and slaved in the fields of China for thirty centuries of time." Whatever its dark motive, this is on its face a very specific complaint about the difficulty of assimilating immigrants from a pre-modern society. In the interim, the Orient has modernized. Today, immigrants from the area are often viewed (perhaps naïvely) as the most, well, "Anglo-Saxon," of the current wave.

Ask a Stupid Question . . .

HISTORICAL perspective also discredits another conventional ploy in the immigration debate: *"How can X be against immigration when the nativists wanted to keep his own great-grandfather out?"* This, of course, is like arguing that a passenger already on board the lifeboat should refrain from pointing out that taking on more will cause it to capsize.

But let's assume, for the sake of argument, that X is Irish-American. Disqualifying him from the debate overlooks the long and painful adjustment to America that the Irish, like every immigrant group, had to make. The Irish too came to the U.S. from what was still basically a pre-modern agricultural society. Throughout the nineteenth century, they displayed social pathologies strikingly similar to those of the current black ghetto: disease, violence, family breakdown, drug addiction (alcohol in those days), and, perhaps not surprisingly, virtually no intermarriage.

Slowly, over generations, America changed the Irish—and they changed themselves. Today, in terms of measures like income, education, and political affiliation, Irish-Americans are more or less indistinguishable from the mainstream, with which they have extensively intermarried. (Well . . . alcoholism is a little higher. But so are incomes.) In his book *The Economics and Politics of Race: An International Perspective*, the Hoover Institution economist Thomas Sowell describes this as "his-

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torically . . . one of the great social transformations of a people." Irish-Americans have earned the hard way their right to opinions about who and how many their country can absorb.

The Irish changed themselves with a great deal of encouragement from a notably stern clergy. But the Roman Catholic Church itself made an adjustment to America. Indeed, the word "Americanization" was invented in the 1850s by a Vermont Yankee convert to Catholicism, Orestes A. Brownson, who argued in his *Brownson's Quarterly Review* that the nativists had a point: the Irish should assimilate to the American nation that had already been formed; the Church should not identify itself with Old World autocracy—as Pius IX, after the 1848 Revolutions in Europe, was inclined to do. Brownson provoked a ferocious controversy. But, today, his view can be seen to have prevailed.

In politics as elsewhere, if you ask a stupid question, you get a stupid answer—or at any rate a terse answer. And asking people if they want their communities to be overwhelmed by weird aliens with dubious habits is a stupid question. The answer is inevitable. Until now in America, chance circumstances and changes in public policy have always combined to change this question before the inevitable answer became too embarrassing. But the greater the number of immigrants, and the greater their difference from the American mainstream, the louder and ruder the answer will be.

The political elite may choose not to hear. Others, however, will.

Closing the Floodgates

AT THE MOMENT, the political elite shows every sign of choosing not to hear. The immigration floodgates were opened by accident in 1965. Opinion polls show most Americans want them shut—for example, in a recent poll by FAIR*, 84 per cent wanted Congress to take a more active role in decreasing immigration and stopping the entry of illegal aliens. But the elite's reaction is unexpectedly odd: it stands around idly, alternately ignoring the situation, denouncing anyone uncouth enough to mention it, and, most frequently, indulging in romantic rationalizations *("The more the merrier!" "Diversity is strength!")*.

This sort of after-the-fact rationalization infests U.S. immigration history. Thus the much-loved lines on the base of the Statue of Liberty—

> *. . . Give me your tired, your poor,*
> *Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,*
> *The wretched refuse of your teeming shore . . .*

—are not part of the Declaration of Independence or some other pronouncement of the Founding Fathers. Instead, they are the reaction of a young Zionist, Emma Lazarus, to the Russian pogroms following the assassination of Czar Alexander II in 1881. They were added years after the dedication of the statue, which was a gift from France to commemorate the U.S centennial and originally supposed to symbolize, not "The Mother of Immigrants" in Miss Lazarus's phrase, but "Liberty Lighting the World"—"liberty *under law*," adds FAIR Chairman Dan Stein, thinking grimly of recent amnesties for illegals.

And they aren't even true. American immigration has typically been quite selective, if only because the cost of passage was (until recently) an effective filter. ". . . even throughout the early history of the U.S.," admits Julian Simon, "immigrants did not arrive with less education than natives had—contrary to popular belief and contrary to the famous poem by Emma Lazarus . . ." Early English settlers included Royalist gentry who went to Virginia, like George Washington's ancestors, and Puritan gentry who went to New England, as Oliver Cromwell and his family once planned to do. And, whatever Yankees may have thought, the Irish immigrants of the 1850s were not the bottom of the barrel.

Asking people if they want their communities to be overwhelmed by weird aliens with dubious habits is a stupid question.

Three-quarters of them were literate; their fares were commonly paid by established extended families.

It was thirty years from the founding of the Immigration Restriction League in 1894 to the passing of the restrictions in the 1920s. FAIR was founded in 1979 and the AICF in 1983. So there are some years to go.

Still, there can be little doubt that, this time around, the political elite has been notably more inhibited about responding to the issue. One important reason has been pointed out by Katherine Betts in *Ideology and Immigration*, her study of the parallel Australian situation. Using polling data, Professor Betts showed that while non-traditional immigration was viewed with increasing hostility among ordinary Australians, the university-educated were inclined to favor it. Favoring immigration, she concluded, was "part of a cluster of values defining social status for Australian intellectuals."

The "New Class," as Irving Kristol has called the confluence of educators, bureaucrats, and media professionals, has everywhere emerged as the key sociological fact of late-twentieth-century political economies. Dogmatic attitudes on immigration and race have become a badge of New Class superiority to ordinary people—and a route to power, since the social stresses resulting from non-traditional immigration are a splendid excuse for further government programs.

Deference to these elite values explains to a significant degree the silence of American conservatives about

*The Federation for American Immigration Reform, Suite 400, 1666 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

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the current immigration wave—in such striking contrast to the aggressive Americanism of Republicans from Henry Cabot Lodge to Theodore Roosevelt last time around.

In his first volume of his autobiography, *Making It*, Norman Podhoretz describes the "brutal bargain" by which he says the children of Eastern European Jews were accepted into WASP society at the price of repressing their ethnic *mores*. Similarly, American conservatives have reached what might be called a "bland bargain" with their country's ruling establishment.

Conservatives are now somewhat more likely to be allowed into public debate than in the dark years of the 1950s. But they still must not say anything that impinges upon the truly sacred liberal taboos—above all anything that might be remotely connected with ethnicity or race. And immigration, of course, is inextricably so connected.

> Absolute size can be useful while seizing a continent or fighting wars. But in the end it is output per capita that determines living standards.

Slaves naturally try to curry favor with their masters. Some conservatives, fixated on the issue of economic growth, have apparently calculated that, by emphasizing the (assumed) need for more immigration, they can establish their non-racist credentials and even advance their limited agenda with the liberal elite.

Slaves can even grow to love their chains. Some conservatives have internalized the prohibitions under which they must operate. An example, alas, seems to be Paul Gigot, the otherwise estimable Washington columnist of the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page. Writing about the question, which became an issue early in the 1992 presidential election cycle, of whether a million Englishmen or a million Zulus would assimilate more easily into Virginia, Gigot expressed good inside-the-Beltway distaste. Then he added an economic-growth twist: *"The Zulus . . . would probably work harder than the English."*

This comment reveals an utter innocence about the reality of ethnic and cultural differences, let alone about little things like tradition and history—in short, the greater part of the conservative vision. Even in its own purblind terms, it is totally false. All the empirical evidence is that immigrants from developed countries assimilate better than those from underdeveloped countries. It is developed countries that teach the skills required for success in the United States. As Borjas puts it ". . . the per capita GNP in the United Kingdom is more than six times greater than [that of] the Dominican Republic. It is not surprising that immigrant households originating in the Dominican Republic are about five times more likely to be on welfare than those in the United Kingdom."

But it should not be necessary to explain that the legacy of Shaka and Cetewayo—overthrown just over a century ago—is not that of Alfred the Great, let alone Elizabeth II or any civilized society.

Let's spell it out with an anecdote. Recently, the South African police were perplexed by an epidemic of murders on the black commuter trains between the townships and Johannesburg. Naturally, Nelson Mandela's African National Congress blamed the government. But the victims were from all factions. Now it has emerged that the black operators of the semi-legal private cab services competing with the railroad had paid gangs of those hard-working Zulus to influence consumer preferences by going on board and throwing passengers from the moving trains.

Asking the Right Questions

SUPPOSING AMERICA'S political elite suddenly decided to notice immigration. What questions should they consider?

▸ Is immigration really necessary to the economy?

Audiences always burst out laughing at one apparently gagless scene in the hit movie *Back to the Future*: the time-transported hero drives up to a gas station in the 1950s, and an army of uniformed attendants leaps forth to pump the gas, clean his windshield, fill his tires, polish his hubcaps, offer him maps, and so on. The joke was in the shock of self-recognition. It was only yesterday—and yet completely forgotten, so accustomed is everyone now to self-service.

"We need immigrants to meet the looming labor shortage/do the dirty work Americans won't do." This further item from the pro-immigration catechism seems to be particularly resonant for the American conservative movement, deeply influenced by libertarian ideas and open, somewhat, to the concerns of business.

But it has always seemed incongruous, given persistent high levels of unemployment among some American-born groups. Since these groups obviously eat, it would appear that public policy is subsidizing their choosiness about work, thus artificially stimulating the demand for immigrants.

And if there is a looming labor shortage (hotly disputed), it could presumably be countered by natalist policies—encouraging Americans to step up their below-replacement birthrate. Even the current high immigration inflow is exceeded by the 1.6 million abortions in the U.S. each year.

For example, the federal income-tax code could be adjested to increase the child allowance. In 1950, this provision exempted the equivalent (in 1992 dollars) of $7,800 for each child; now, after inflation, it exempts only $2,100. Or the "marriage penalty"—by which a couple pay more in taxes if they marry than if they live

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together out of wedlock—could be abolished. Or the public-school cartel could be broken up, reducing the crushing costs of educating a child.

But *Back to the Future* makes a more fundamental point: labor is not an absolute. Free economies are infinitely ingenious at finding methods, and machinery, to economize on labor or any other scarce resource.

The implicit assumption behind the economic argument for immigration appears to be something like this:

Labor × *Capital* = *Economic Growth*

So, for any given capital stock, any increase in labor (putting aside the question of its quality) will result in at least some increase in output.

This assumption is just wrong. Typically, technical studies that attempt to account for economic growth find that increases in labor and capital account for at most half and often much less of increases in output. Simon Kuznets's survey of the growth of the West over the last two centuries concluded that increases in labor and physical capital together were responsible for less than 10 per cent of the greatest output surge in human history. The rest seems to be attributable to changes in organization—to technological progress and ideas. Or:

Economic Growth = *Labor* × *Capital* × {???}

And {???} is dominant.

Back to the Future illustrates this process in action. On the face of it, gas stations have simply substituted capital (the self-service pumps) for labor (gas jockeys). But actually what has happened is more complex: the cost of making the pumps, and of designing the computer system behind them, is far exceeded by the savings on labor, which extend indefinitely into the future. It is reorganization that has resulted in a permanent increase in productivity.

From an economist's standpoint, the factors of production are not absolutes, but a fluid series of conditional interacting relationships. This insight won Julian Simon one of the famous debating victories of our age. In 1980, he bet the well-known liberal doomster Paul Ehrlich that several commodities Ehrlich claimed were running out would in fact be lower in price in 1990, the economy having adjusted in the meantime. They were, and Ehrlich had to pay up. Paradoxically, however, when it comes to immigration, Simon seems to revert to a classic non-economic view: Labor is good, more labor is better.

The economic view of labor has influenced the current immigration debate only in one direction: it is triumphantly produced by the pro-immigration side to refute any unwary critic of immigration who assumes that native-born workers must inevitably be displaced. They aren't, necessarily, in aggregate, because the economy adjusts; and because the increase in the factors of production tends to create new opportunities. "Immigrants not only take jobs," writes Julian Simon, "they make jobs."

Maybe. But missing from the current immigration debate is the fact that this effect operates in the other direction too. On the margin, the economy is probably just as capable of getting along with less labor. Within quite wide boundaries, *any* change in the labor supply can be swamped by the much larger influence of innovation and technological change.

The historical importance of immigration to the U.S. can be exaggerated. Surprising as it may seem, demographers agree that the American population would be about half its present size—that is, much bigger than Germany's and about as big as Japan's—even if there had been no immigration after 1790. Even more significantly, the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* estimates that immigration did not increase U.S. per-capita output at all. Indeed, both France and Germany outstripped the U.S. in growth of per-capita output in the hundred years after the mid nineteenth century.

Absolute size can be useful while seizing a continent or fighting wars. But in the end it is output per capita that determines living standards. And both proportionately and absolutely, in an increasingly technical age, what will count is not the quantity of people but their quality—and the quality of their ideas.

The {???} factor is the explanation for the great counter-factual episode hanging like the sword of Damocles over contemporary pro-immigration polemics: the success of Japan since World War II. Despite its population of only 125 million and virtually no immigration at all, Japan has grown into the second-largest economy on earth. The Japanese seem to have been able to substitute capital for labor, in the shape of factory robots. And they have apparently steadily reconfigured their economy, concentrating on high value-added production, exporting low-skilled jobs to factories in nearby cheap-labor countries rather than importing the low-skilled labor to Japan.

It is highly significant of the false nature of the American immigration debate that, despite all the public hysteria about Japan, no attempt is ever made to look for lessons in its immigration policy. Incredibly, although his book is called *The Economic Consequences of Immigration*, Julian Simon simply ignores the subject altogether. Asked about it by *Forbes* magazine's Jim Cook, he in effect struck out: "How Japan gets along I don't know. But we may have to recognize that some countries are *sui generis*."

However, Simon's view of the impact of immigrants does include important qualifications, which his enthusiastic acolytes often miss. Simon believes that native-born workers are not *necessarily* displaced *in aggregate*. In his book, he frankly and repeatedly acknowledges that "Any labor-force change causes some groups to suffer some harm in the short run . . . It is true that some particular groups may be injured by a particular group of immigrants . . ." (This works in reverse. Agribusiness lobbies for cheap immigrant labor rather than mechanize itself, regardless of the overall cost to the economy. Ironically, agribusiness is itself often subsidized—for example, by federal water projects.)

As it happens, the U.S. contains one particular group

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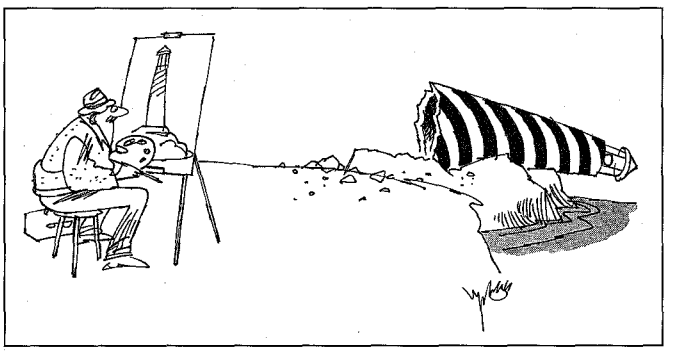
that is clearly vulnerable to competition from immigration: blacks. This question has attracted attention for years. Immigration from Europe after the Civil War is sometimes said to have fatally retarded the economic integration of the freed slaves. Conversely, no less an authority than Simon Kuznets felt that the Great Immigration Lull after the 1920s enabled Southern blacks to begin their historic migration to the cities and the economic opportunities of the North.

Blacks themselves take a dim view of immigration, according to opinion polls. In the FAIR poll cited above, 83 per cent of blacks thought Congress should curb immigration. But George Borjas found that blacks living in areas of immigrant concentration did not appear to have suffered significantly reduced incomes compared with those elsewhere. The reason, he theorizes, is that during the years in question—the 1970s—the effect of immigration was overwhelmed by the effects of baby-boomers and women entering the labor market. Now, of course, these factors no longer apply. Additionally, studies of high-immigrant areas may fail to capture a tendency for native-born workers to relocate because of the increased competition. Across the entire country, the wages of native high-school dropouts fell by 10 per cent in the 1980s relative to the wages of more educated workers. Borjas calculates that about a third of that decline is attributable to immigration.



Borjas, moreover, was perturbed by the tendency of low-skilled recent immigrants, not necessarily to displace American blacks, but to join them in swelling the ranks of the underclass: "Few issues facing the U.S. are as important, and as difficult to resolve, as the persistent problem of poverty in our midst . . . The empirical evidence presented here suggests that immigration is exacerbating this problem."

Since the Great Society, a significant part of the black community has succumbed to social pathology. There is at least a possibility that this is related to the simultaneous opening of the immigration floodgates. In which case, it is perhaps to current policy, and not to critics of immigration, that the over-used epithet "racist" might best be applied.

Another important Simon qualification, unnoticed by his acolytes, is his concept of "negative human-capital externalities." Most recent immigrants have lower skill levels than natives, he notes. If enough of them were to arrive, they could overwhelm and render less effective the higher skills of the natives. "In other words, if there is a huge flood of immigrants from Backwardia to Richonia, Richonia will become economically similar to Backwardia, with loss to Richonians and little gain to immigrants from Backwardia . . . So even if *some* immigrants are beneficial, a *very large* number coming from poorer countries . . . may have the opposite effect."

This is a crucial theoretical concession. Coupled with the fact that the numbers and type of potential immigrants are unknown, it is the reason Simon quietly declines to follow the logic of his other arguments and endorse completely open borders (as, for example, the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page has done). Of course, he insists that immigration levels could be *much* higher than at present. But Richonians in California, Florida, and New York City might not agree.

"You have to accept the free movement of people if you believe in free trade/free markets." You do? It's a more radical proposition than appears at first sight. Third World populations are very large and their wage levels very low—Mexican wages are a tenth of those north of the border, and Mexico is relatively advanced. So calculations of the market-clearing wage in a U.S. with open borders necessarily imply that it must be some fraction of its present level. This arrangement might optimize global economic utility. But it can hardly improve American social harmony.

However, a calculation of this sort requires impossible assumptions. The fact is that a belief in free markets does not commit you to free immigration. The two are quite distinct. Even Julian Simon, although he favors immigration, says explicitly that immigration's benefits are not from "trade-like effects":

> Contrary to intuition, the theory of the international trade of goods is quite inapplicable to the international movement of persons. There is no immediate large consumer benefit from the movement of persons that is analogous to the international exchange of goods, because the structure of supply is not changed in the two countries as a whole, as it is when trade induces specialization in production . . . the shifts due to international migration benefit only the migrant.

On a practical level, free trade actually tends to operate as a substitute for immigration. Hence the Japanese have factories in the Philippines rather than Filipinos in Japan. And Victorian Britain, with its grand strategy of "splendid isolation" from the quarrels of Europe, combined total free trade with almost no immigration, a policy that satisfied Liberal "Little Englanders" and Tory Imperialists alike.

In theory, free trade with Mexico should help reduce the current immigrant flood by providing work south of the border. In practice, however, "free-trade negotiations" (a paradox: what's to negotiate?) often get captured by political elites seeking to favor client constituencies. Rumors that the current talks with Mexico might lead, absurdly, to an *increase* in immigration suggest this insidious process is well under way.

A commitment to free trade and free markets does not mean that you would sell your mother if the price was right. The free market necessarily exists within a

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social framework. And it can function only if the institutions in that framework are appropriate. For example, a defined system of private property is now widely agreed to be one essential precondition. Economists have a word for these preconditions: the "metamarket." Some degree of ethnic and cultural coherence may be among them. Thus immigration may be a metamarket issue.

At the very least, a diverse population increases what in economics-speak are called "transaction costs." Dealing with people whom you don't know and therefore can't trust requires expensive precautions. I suspect this is one factor behind the legalism infesting business practices in the U.S., as compared to Britain. Beyond this, capitalism generates inequality and therefore envy. And such emotions can be much more intense across ethnic and racial lines—witness the fate of the Korean storekeepers in Los Angeles.

This is not an unprecedented insight. Friedrich von Hayek, the first classical liberal to win the Nobel Prize for economics, used to advance a sort of sociobiological argument for the apparently immortal appeal of socialism. Cities and civilization have come very late in human history, he pointed out. Almost all mankind's experience has been in small hunter-gatherer bands. Face-to-face relationships are still much more comprehensible to us than impersonal ones. Thus an increase in rent is blamed on the greed and obnoxiousness of the individual landlord, and provokes an irresistible urge to bash him with rent controls, despite all the evidence that this leads merely to shortages and inequity. And, to extend Hayek's argument, it is obviously easier to demonize a landlord if his features are visibly alien.

Another classical liberal Nobel Laureate, Milton Friedman, has speculated that the culture of the English-speaking world itself may be, from an economic standpoint, *sui generis* . . . in Simon's phrase. I interviewed him for *Forbes* magazine in 1988:

> FRIEDMAN: . . . The history of the world is the history of tyranny and misery and stagnation. Periods of growth are exceptional, very exceptional.
>
> BRIMELOW: You've mentioned what you see as the institutional prerequisites for capitalism. Do you think there might be cultural prerequisites too?
>
> FRIEDMAN: Oh, yes. For example, truthfulness. The success of Lebanon as a commercial entrepot was to a significant degree because the merchants' word could be trusted. It cut down transaction costs.
>
> It's a curious fact that capitalism developed and has really come to fruition in the English-speaking world. It hasn't really made the same progress even in Europe—certainly not in France, for instance. I don't know why this is so, but the fact has to be admitted.

Eschewing these more subtle considerations, George Borjas focuses on the quantifiable. His conclusion is stark. "The economic arguments for immigration simply aren't decisive," he told me recently. "You have to make a political case—for example, does the U.S. have to take Mexican immigrants to provide a safety valve and keep Mexico stable?"

Put it another way: for the U.S., immigration is not an economic necessity. It is a luxury. Like all luxuries, it can help—or it can hurt.

▶ Is immigration really beneficial to society?

Forty-four years ago, Richard Weaver published a book the title of which, at least, convinced the conservative movement: *Ideas Have Consequences.* It is now time to recognize a further truth: *Immigration Has Consequences.*

The crudest consequences relate to political power. Because many libertarians and economic-growth conservatives are so reluctant to admit this logical possibility, it is worth emphasizing that there are plenty of examples of immigrants and their descendants threatening the political balance of a state (polity), from the *Uitlanders* in the nineteenth-century Boer Republics to the Indian politicians recently elected to govern Fiji and promptly deposed by the ethnically Fijian army. And how about this chilling comment from the *Harvard Encyclopedia*?

> In obtaining land grants in Texas, Anglo immigrants agreed to become Mexican citizens, obey Mexican laws, accept the official Catholic faith, learn Spanish, and take other steps to become fully assimilated as law-abiding citizens. However, over the years, it became clear that these settlers, now Anglo-Mexicans, were not becoming integrated into the nation and that Anglo immigration had become a problem . . . The strains and disagreements ultimately led to the Texas Revolution in 1835.

Er, quite.

These political consequences need not threaten the integrity of the state (polity)—just its foreign policy.

Immigration from Europe after the Civil War is sometimes said to have fatally retarded the economic integration of the freed slaves.

Thus domestic ethnic-group pressure clearly plays a role in Washington's essentially contradictory attitudes to the white settler communities of southern Africa and the Middle East.

But probably the most important consequences are cultural. "The most obvious fact about the history of racial and ethnic groups," writes Thomas Sowell in *The Economics and Politics of Race,* "is how different they have been—and still are." Sowell's work, carried on in *Ethnic America: A History,* conclusively demonstrates that cultural patterns are pervasive, powerful, and remarkably persistent, even after generations of living under common institutions, as in the United States. (Similarly, David Hackett Fischer's monumental *Albion's Seed* recently traced America's dominant folk-

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ways all the way back to four distinct waves of colonial immigration from different regions of Britain.)

"But aren't these consequences good?" Naturally, there isn't anything in the pro-immigration script about cultural consequences. However, this is the usual reaction if you insist on raising the point. It's embarrassing, of course. In the current climate, it is impossible to discuss the failings of any ethnic group.

But look at it this way: Thomas Sowell's work shows that cultural traits, such as attitudes to work and education, are intrinsically related to economic success. Germans, Japanese, and Jews are successful wherever they are in the world. Conversely, the work of George Borjas and others shows that national origin, a proxy for culture, is an excellent predictor of economic failure, as measured by propensity to go on welfare. In a recent paper, Borjas has demonstrated that disparities among the 1880-to-1920 immigrant groups have persisted for as much as four generations. Thus there can be absolutely no question that the cultural characteristics of current immigrant groups will have consequences for the U.S.—in this case, economic consequences—far into the future.

The Republicans are the party of the American majority; the Democrats are the party of the American minorities.

The same argument applies to crime. Random street crime, the great scandal of American cities since the 1960s, is clearly related to impulsiveness and present-orientation, a key cultural variable. More significant, however, is organized crime. This has typically been ethnically based, partly because it reduces the criminals' transaction costs and because such groups are difficult to penetrate.

In recent years the Mafia or *Cosa Nostra* has been in decline, not least because of the acculturation of Italian-Americans. But this is "dirty work" that some of the post-1965 immigrant groups are positively anxious to do—more violently, particularly in the burgeoning drug business, than the Mafia ever was. There are several such new "mafias," staffed by Russian Jews, Hong Kong Chinese, Colombians, and even less well-known communities like the Chaldeans—Iraqi Christians whose convenience stores in the Detroit ghetto are centers of criminal activity.

Today such news would be judged unfit to print regardless of its accuracy. Researchers find that official figures on immigrant and ethnic crime patterns are rarely collected. That certain ethnic cultures are more crime-prone than others, however, must be considered a real possibility.

Curiously, Congress appears to have shaken off its general paralysis to recognize that immigration can have cultural consequences—for Pacific Islanders. Five U.S. territories, American Samoa, Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, the Northern Marianas, and Palau, have been given control over immigration to protect their ethnic majorities. In American Samoa and the Northern Marianas, U.S. citizens cannot even own land unless they are Samoan, Chamorro, or Carolinian.

This double standard has incensed an extremely erudite and energetic professional writer in Rye, New York, Joseph E. Fallon. Fallon argues that controlling immigration is simply a question of American self-determination. And he is attempting to organize a class-action law suit challenging current policy on the grounds of the 1948 Genocide Convention, which banned "deliberately inflicting upon a [national] group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part."

Which, after all, is no crazier than much liberal litigation.

▶ Is immigration really good for (ahem) the Republicans?

The fate of the Republican Party may not be of concern to the political elite as a whole. But it should worry those aspiring members of the elite who also consider themselves conservatives.

Ethnicity is destiny in American politics. This point was made definitively in Kevin Phillips's brilliant *The Emerging Republican Majority* (1968), which demonstrated that ethnic settlement patterns had an amazingly persistent influence on voting patterns. Phillips predicted on the basis of demography that the Republicans would replace the Democrats as the majority party. And he was undeniably right in the presidential contest, even if timid and unimaginative leadership has squandered the opportunity on the congressional level.

As a glance around any of their meetings will tell you, the Republicans are the party of the American majority; the Democrats are the party of the American minorities. On its WASP foundation, the Republican Party has been able to add the children of each immigrant wave as they assimilate. This was the unmistakable subtext of the 1988 presidential election. With a Greek-American nominee, and implicitly anti-WASP attacks on George Bush's "preppie-ness," the Democrats hoped to hold the 1880-to-1920 immigrant wave. But they failed, just as nominating John F. Kennedy in 1960 did not prevent the continued defection of Irish-Americans.

The post-1965 immigrants, however, are overwhelmingly visible minorities. These are precisely the groups that the Republican Party has had the most difficulty recruiting. And, Jack Kemp please note, this is not necessarily a question of the Republicans' making nice, or nicer, to minorities. It may reflect the more divergent minorities' different values, and their more radical feeling of alienation from white American society. Current immigration policy is inexorably reinforcing Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition.

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The strained sound you hear is the conservative leadership whistling as they pass by the rainbow. Prohibited by the Bland Bargain from discussing the problem, they have indulged in a frenzy of wishful thinking. *"We get quite a good vote from some Hispanic groups."* Well, Hispanics are not quite as Democratic as blacks—that's a statistical impossibility—but the Republicans still face an uphill struggle. Even the much-lauded Cuban vote has actually been quite split, electing the likes of Claude Pepper and Dante Fascell to Congress. And Republican success with Hispanics, as with other minorities, is often at the expense of conservative principles. *"West Indians are different."* Some West Indians do appear to have been more economically successful than American blacks, although it must be said that nowadays part of their enterprise goes into drug "posses" and car-theft rings. However, the skill level of the post-1965 wave of West Indian immigrants has deteriorated sharply. Caribbean immigrants are now the most prone of all to welfare dependency. And anyway, the political consequences were always illusory. Shirley Chisholm and Stokely Carmichael are both of West Indian descent. *"The Asians are small-business types, education-minded, family-oriented—they're natural Republicans."* So were the Jews, and look how they vote—still overwhelmingly and outspokenly Democratic despite the best efforts of a brilliant generation of conservative Jewish intellectuals. And Hawaii, where Asians predominate, is a Democratic stronghold. The truth is that no one really knows how the Asians will vote. But since 1965 they have become a minority twice as large as the Jews, and potentially at least as influential.

▶ Is immigration really good for the environment?

American liberalism has survived the loss of its traditional issue, economic management, by improvising new ones. And environmentalism is one of the most important, both because it particularly appeals to the vocal upper middle class and because it appears to necessitate an interventionist government. Yet the single biggest problem for the environment is the fact that the U.S. population, quite unusually in the developed world, is still growing quickly. Immigration is currently an unusually large factor in U.S. population growth.

Like the impact of immigration on native workers, the relationship between population and pollution is subtler than it looks. A primitive band of slash-and-burn agriculturalists can cause more devastation than a much larger community of modern ex-urbanites with sealed sewage systems and manicured horse farms.

But only within limits. Something has clearly got to give if the population of California grows from 20 million in 1970 to 60 million by 2020, which is Leon Bouvier's upper-limit projection. (His lower-limit projection: a mere 44 million. Phooey!) The fragile desert ecologies of the Southwest may not be utterly destroyed. But they must be transformed. California will cease to be the Golden State and become the Golden Subdivision.

This prospect is presumably anathema to true environmentalists, who value wilderness in itself. But although a few were active in founding FAIR, most of the professional environmentalist community in Washington avoid the issue. Which is a measure of the extent to which they have been co-opted by the liberal establishment—just like the civil-rights lobby, which never voices the anti-immigration sentiments widespread among the black masses.

No reason, however, why conservatives should not use the immigration issue to wrong-foot them all.

▶ Is the U.S. still culturally capable of absorbing immigrants?

Let's be clear about this: The American experience with immigration has been a triumphant success. It has so far transcended anything seen in Europe as to make the application of European lessons an exercise to be performed with care.

But in the late twentieth century, the economic and political culture of the U.S. has changed significantly—from classical liberalism to an interventionist welfare statism. In the previous two hundred years of U.S. history, a number of tried-and-true, but undeniably tough, techniques of assimilation had been perfected. Today, they have been substantially abandoned. Earlier waves of immigrants were basically free to succeed or fail. And many failed: as much as a third of the 1880-to-1920 immigrants returned to their native lands. But with the current wave, public policy interposes itself, with the usual debatable results.

"You can't blame the immigrants for our bad policies." Of course you can't. But if there's a shower when you've got pneumonia, you don't blame the rain. You just stay indoors.

Some of public subsidies to immigrants are direct, like welfare. Others are indirect, such as the wholly new idea that immigrant children should be taught in their own language, thus transferring part of the costs of immigration from the immigrant to the American taxpayer. New York's public-school system now offers courses in more than a hundred languages—and is hunting for teachers of Albanian, who will probably themselves be immigrants.

Pro-immigration advocates are fighting furiously to defend the proposition that subsidies to immigrants are not a net cost to native-born Americans because of the taxes immigrants pay. But they are clearly losing.

George Borjas's most recent estimate is that immigrants' cash welfare benefits alone cost about $1 billion more than is paid in taxes each year. (Tellingly, immigrants prone to welfare dependency seem to get more addicted as they assimilate.) And he points out that there is no guarantee that any increase in total economic output from immigration will compensate those specific Americans paying taxes in high-immigrant areas.

Whatever the academic argument, Wall Street in its unideological, money-grubbing way is already pulling back its snout. As the investment firm Sanford C. Bern-

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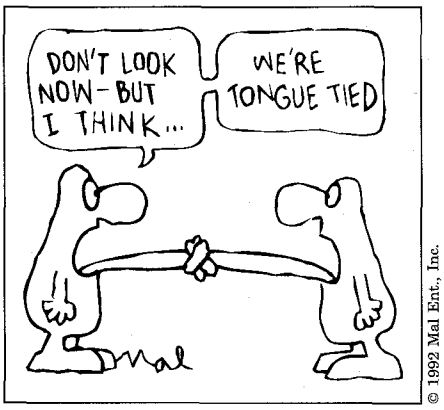
stein commented tersely in downgrading California's bond rating last year: "The primary reasons for the State's credit decline are above-average population growth and shifting demographics . . . the degree of public assistance required by two of the fastest growing groups, Latinos and political/ethnic refugees, is substantially higher than that of the general population." Governor Pete Wilson has been trying to control welfare and get more remedial federal aid. But he has only himself to blame. As a U.S. senator, he worked hard for the 1986 amnesty for illegal immigrants favored by agricultural interests.

Ultimately, however, any overall break-even calculation is irrelevant. The nature of averages dictates that many immigrants must get more than they give. And any public subsidies must affect whatever demand/supply balance exists for immigrants. A year for one student in the New York City public-school system, for example, involves an average taxpayer expenditure greater than the per-capita national income of Haiti. National health care, if enacted, could be an even greater magnet.



And it's not just the American economic culture that has changed. So has the political culture. Ethnically fueled "multiculturalism" taught in the public schools, as described by Lawrence Auster and by the eminently establishmentarian Arthur Schlesinger in his current best-seller *The Disuniting of America*, raises the question of whether there is still an "American Idea"—and if so, what is it?

Actually, the outlines of what might be described as the new American Anti-Idea are already appallingly clear. It's a sort of neosocialism, derived from what Thomas Sowell calls "the Civil Rights Vision" and amounting to a sort of racial spoils system. Government power is used not to achieve economic efficiency, which traditional socialism can no longer promise, but ethnic equity—most importantly, the extirpation of "discrimination."

That's private discrimination, of course. Government-sponsored discrimination is not merely acceptable but mandatory, in the form of "affirmative action" quotas. "Quotas were originally supposed to be remedial," says Professor Frederick R. Lynch of Claremont College, author of *Invisible Victims: White Males and the Crisis of Affirmative Action*. "Now they are being justified by affirmative-action professionals as a way of 'managing diversity.'" That "diversity," needless to say, is being substantially introduced into the U.S. by current immigration policy.

Indeed, absurd as it may appear, all brand-new immigrants from the right "protected class"—black, Hispanic, Asian—count toward government quota requirements that were allegedly imposed to help native-born Americans. Hence a number of the African PhDs teaching at American colleges. The 1986 Immigration Act prohibited discrimination against legalized "undocumented" aliens and set up an office in the Justice Department to enforce this new law.

Symptomatic of the American Anti-Idea is the emergence of a strange anti-nation inside the U.S.—the so-called "Hispanics." The various groups of Spanish-speaking immigrants are now much less encouraged to assimilate to American culture. Instead, as a result of ethnic lobbying in Washington, they are treated by U.S. government agencies as a homogeneous "protected class," even though many of them have little in common with one another. (Indeed, some are Indian-language speakers from Latin America.) And they have been supplied with "leaders" financed to a significant extent by the Ford Foundation.

In effect, Spanish-speakers are still being encouraged to assimilate. But not to America.

Many current public policies have an unmistakable tendency to deconstruct the American nation. Apart from official bilingualism and multiculturalism, these policies include: multilingual ballots; defining citizenship so as to include all children born here—even the children of illegals; the abandonment of English as a prerequisite for citizenship; the erosion of citizenship as the sole qualification for voting; the extension of welfare and education benefits as a right to illegals and their children; congressional and state legislative apportionment based on legal and illegal populations.

Finally, there is a further ominous change in American political culture since 1910: a peculiar element of emotionalism that has entered intellectual life.

Julian Simon in *The Economic Consequences of Immigration* makes an admirable effort to be honest about his underlying motives: "Perhaps a few words about my tastes are appropriate. I delight in looking at the variety of faces I see on the subway when I visit New York . . . [telling innocent visiting schoolgirls] about the Irish in New York—and about other groups too—I get tears in my eyes, as again I do now in recalling the incident." This is obviously somewhat different from my own reaction to the New York subway, although presumably we are both also studying those faces to see if their owners plan to mug us.

But in debate Professor Simon is notably quick to attribute unattractive motives if anyone dares raise America's shifting ethnic balance—although logically the onus should be on him to show why the balance should be shifted, and what he has against the American nation. To *Forbes* magazine, Simon was flatly dogmatic: "The notion of wanting to keep out immigrants in order to keep our institutions and our values is pure prejudice." This intense reaction surely goes beyond "taste."

Even more significant was this recent column from A. M. Rosenthal in the *New York Times*:

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Almost always now, when I read about Haitians who risk the seas to get to this country but wind up behind barbed wire, I think of an illegal immigrant I happen to know myself, and of his daughters and his son.

Then a shiver of shame and embarrassment goes through me . . .

The illegal immigrant was—Rosenthal's father. He came here from Russia via Canada.

Many years later, when his children told the story of their father and his determination to find work in America, to hell with borders, people smiled in admiration of this man. And always, his children were filled with pride about him . . . I know that if he had been born in Haiti or lived there, he would have broken every law that stood between him and work in the U.S.

In short, because one generation of Americans failed to catch an illegal immigrant, their children must accept more, transforming their nation into a charity ward.

Imagine what a quick pickup [a] lobby, or parade, demanding succor for the Haitians could do if it were headed by a few Irish-American cardinals, a batch of rabbis, and the presidents of Eastern European, Greek, Italian, Arab, and Turkish organizations. American Blacks and Wasps welcome too!

. . . Even reluctantly recognizing some economic limitations, this country should have the moral elegance to accept neighbors who flee countries where life is terror and hunger, and are run by murderous gangs left over from dictatorships we ourselves maintained and cosseted.

If that were a qualification for entry into our golden land, the Haitians should be welcomed with song, embrace, and memories.

Be careful about those embraces. A significant proportion of Haitians are reported to be HIV positive.

The search for an explanation for the paralysis of the American immigration debate, and the drive to transform America from a nation into a charity ward, need go no further than this fretful psychodrama in the mind of the man who, as editor of the *New York Times*, substantially set the national media agenda.

Actually, Rosenthal is unfair to Jewish organizations. They have generally supported immigration. FAIR's Director of Media Outreach, Ira Mehlman—who like his chairman, Dan Stein, is himself Jewish—looks depressed at the thought. "They still think it's 1939," he says. "But even if we took all the Soviet Jews, and all the Israelis, that would still only be 6 million people." As it is, FAIR expects 15 million immigrants in the 1990s.

End of Chapter

NEXT YEAR will see the hundredth anniversary of Frederick Jackson Turner's famous lecture on "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." The Superintendent of the Census had just announced that there was no longer a continuous line of free, unsettled land visible on the American map. Closing with the frontier, said Turner, was "the first period of American history." A century later, it may be time to close the second period of American history with the announcement that the U.S. is no longer an "immigrant country."

Because just as the American nation was made with unusual speed, so it is perfectly possible that it could be unmade. On speeded-up film, the great cloud formations boil up so that they dominate the sky. But they also unravel and melt away.

And why do I, an immigrant, care? For one reason, I am the father of a nine-month-old American, Alexander James Frank. He seems to like it here. A second reason: just as Voltaire said in the eighteenth century that every man has two countries, his own and France, so in this century no civilized person can be indifferent to the fate of America.

Beyond this . . . I have an infant memory, more vivid even than my later purgatory in INS. I am playing with my twin brother in the back yard of my aunt's home in a Lancashire cotton town. Suddenly, great whooping giants in U.S. Air Force uniforms (although with the crystal-clear recollection of childhood, I now realize that they had the lithe figures of very young men) leap out and grab us. We are terrified and struggle free.

Which always made me feel bad in subsequent years. They were far from home, lodging with my aunt. And they just wanted a souvenir photograph.

They were the cold-war tail of that vast host that had come to Britain during World War II, when the whole town had resounded night and day to the roar of B-24 engines on the test beds at the great Burtonwood airbase, and everyone had been glad to hear them. They were, as Robert E. Lee once described his troops, not professional soldiers, but citizens who had taken up arms for their country. However, Housman's "Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries" applies to them:

Their shoulders held the sky suspended;
They stood, and earth's foundations stay.

I don't know what happened to them, although I remember one young wife showing us the first color slides we had ever seen, of Southern California, and explaining that they hoped to move to this breathtaking paradise when they got out of the service. They will be old now, if they are still alive. I don't know what they or their children think of the unprecedented experiment being performed, apparently by accident and certainly with no apprehension of the possible consequences, upon the nation they so bravely represented.

I do know, however, that they ought to be asked. □

POSTSCRIPT: "At a Cabinet meeting today, Attorney General William P. Barr said nearly one-third of the first 6,000 [Los Angeles] riot suspects arrested and processed through the court system were illegal aliens, according to a senior Administration official. Barr has not proposed any special effort to have them deported, a Justice Department spokesman said."

—*Washington Post*, May 6, 1992

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Let's Everyone Be Sensible, And Agree with Roger Rosenblatt

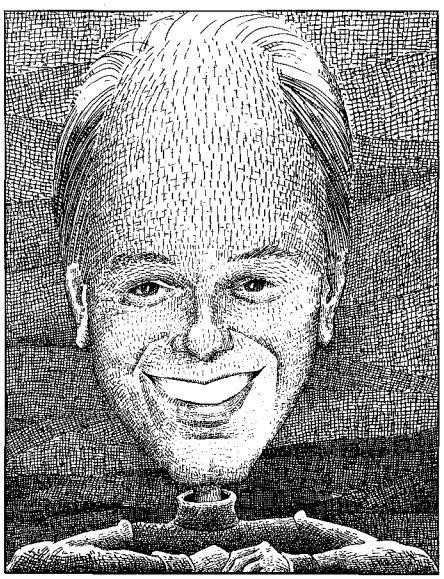
HADLEY ARKES

MR. ROGER ROSENBLATT has claimed the attention of a wide audience as an "essayist" for the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour* and editor-at-large at *Life* magazine. Affecting in this book to search for a settlement of the vexing problem of abortion, he seeks guidance, in part, through an embassy to the state of Iowa. There he finds the reaction of Middle America, good folk who are, as the saying goes, "conflicted." They are thoughtful people, or at least they are given to much pondering, with little result. They are too honest to pretend that the offspring in the womb is anything other than a human child; but in Rosenblatt's account, they cannot quite bring themselves to reject even the most facile reasons that are served up as excuses for abortion. Like many other mortals, they find it hard to reason about the matter in a demanding, coherent way, especially when it touches their own interests. They can-

Life Itself: Abortion in the American Mind, by Roger Rosenblatt (Random House, 194 pp., $20)

not give a principled account of their own motives, or provide a justification for their judgments. In short, they reflect the state of mind of the writer himself. And that demonstrates, to Mr. Rosenblatt, that they are "sensible" Americans.

H. L. Mencken would have looked at the same sample and found a reflection instead of that familiar character, Boobus Americanus. He would have wondered why an urbane man should look to these people as a source of instruction on any matter of moral consequence. But it is part of Mr. Rosenblatt's strategy to suggest that the urbane have no deeper resources of reflection to bring to this matter of abortion, because there is no question here, finally, that lends itself to the arts of reason. The record of embryology and genetics has apparently produced no evidence worth reckoning on the nature of that occupant of the



Sam Westbrook

womb. And a tradition of reflection running back two thousand years has not managed to produce any principles that would allow us to distinguish between moral arguments that are plausible and ones that are vacuous.

It is Rosenblatt's contention that every relevant scientific or moral question hinges on a matter of opinion, and no opinion claims any more sovereignty or truth than any other. The strands of this understanding are by now familiar. They supply the foundation of what for most college freshmen in this country would constitute the sum of their thought on matters philosophic. The improbable part is that they should furnish, for a seasoned writer, the premises on which he would frame an entire book.

With those premises in place, Rosenblatt offers, first, a survey of attitudes on abortion over the years, in different countries, and a sampling of the treatment of abortion in the laws of different places. But for all the effect they had on his conclusions, these pages might have been omitted altogether or replaced with something entirely different—say, the saga of the White Sox in their race to the pennant in 1959. For in Rosenblatt's hands the parade of opinions simply confirms . . . the parade of opinions. The persisting variety of opinions is taken as evidence for the absence of any truths that can settle the question and dissolve the disagreement. But of course that anchoring premise would be understood, instantly, by philosophers as a self-refuting proposition: "The presence of disagreement establishes the absence of truth." As soon as anyone registers his disagreement with *that* proposition, it would be enough to establish its falsity.

But the maneuver does serve the purpose of clearing from the field the pretension to any discipline of reasoning. And what it leaves is the possibility of appealing to something homespun and down to earth: the reactions of those good, plain, natural people in Iowa. What Rosenblatt distills from the brew of opinions is this sense of the matter: Most people think that abortion involves the taking of a human life, and it is not to be done for anything less than a grave or weighty reason. But they also think that life is complicated, that the circumstances of any family are so hard to judge from the outside that they are reluctant to cast judgments and lay down laws for anyone else. The result is to produce this "resolution," as Rosenblatt calls it: "permit but discourage." The notion should be conveyed to people that they should choose abortion with misgiving and strain—and perhaps even with a healthy dose of guilt—but that nothing should finally stand in the way of that choice. ("No, Hodgkins, you *may* still lynch blacks, but you must do it with a proper anguish, and with a sense of the immanent tragedy of life.") And now that the Supreme Court is on the threshold of overturn-

Mr. Arkes is the Edward Ney Professor of Jurisprudence at Amherst College and a Bradley Scholar at the Heritage Foundation. His most recent book is Beyond the Constitution *(Princeton).*

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ing *Roe* v. *Wade*, this distilled wisdom expresses itself, for Rosenblatt, in this prescription: "It is time for Congress to make a law like *Roe* v. *Wade* that fully protects abortion rights but legislates the kind of community help like sex education that would diminish the practice."

This is the key, which unlocks the plan of the book and reveals the levels of deception that have been built—quite deliberately—into its design. For what Rosenblatt is endorsing, in this rearrangement of words, is not a law that "fully protects abortion rights," but a law that protects the *full* rights of abortion established under *Roe* v. *Wade* and its companion case of *Doe* v. *Bolton*. And what that means is a law that protects a right to abortion on demand, *an abortion chosen for any reason whatsoever, through the entire nine months of the pregnancy*. But nothing in that state of affairs could possibly coincide with the folksy wisdom that Rosenblatt claims to have found in the people of Iowa, or in the surveys steadily taken, over twenty years, of plain people throughout the nation.

TO HIS partial credit, Rosenblatt records some of the latter findings in an appendix to his book, even when they embarrass his argument. Of course, it comes as no surprise that most people in the country support "abortion rights" in the sense that most people will find some circumstances under which the taking of a life may be justified. Most people will accept abortions in the case (more and more rare these days) when the life of the mother may be endangered. And with less than strenuous reasoning, most people are willing to accept the abortion of a child in cases of rape and incest, even though the child in the womb remains as innocent in these cases as in any other. But the public emphatically refuses to endorse the franchise claimed by Rosenblatt, a right on the part of the woman "to pursue her manifest destiny unencumbered by limitations not of [her] own choosing." Much to his surprise, the public will not accept abortions for the sake merely of removing encumbrances or inconveniences. Over 66 per cent would refuse to permit abortion even if a pregnant teenager might be compelled to drop out of school, and even if the family were poor. The public would oppose these abortions even in the first three months of the pregnancy. Since the people do not regard abortions under these circumstances as justified, it does not make a difference to them at what point these surgeries are performed. The public, it would appear, has a clearer sense than Rosenblatt about the kinds of discriminations that make no difference in principle.

In fact, it becomes plain that the people of America are willing to do, insistently, what Rosenblatt enduringly refuses to do, which is to deliberate about the conditions under which abortions may be justified or unjustified. Rosenblatt is instantly ready to accept abortion as a "necessity" without inquiring too exactingly into the details of any case, and so he must take notice when the public draws lines in places that he did not expect: 56 per cent of the respondents in one survey refused to sanction abortion merely because the baby was likely to be born blind (and therefore "defective"). And 53 per cent would not consider an abortion if the baby would be missing an arm or a leg.

Yet, in all strictness, why should they? Do we ordinarily think that we would be justified in taking the lives of other people because they are blind, or because they happen to be missing one of their limbs? Rosenblatt concedes that the child in the womb is a human being. But in that case, why would he not demand reasons as compelling as the justifications he would demand in other cases for the taking of a human life? Rosenblatt would prefer to leave the matter muted, but it is necessary to make the point explicit: For Rosenblatt, the right to abortion would indeed encompass the right to destroy the child on account of its blindness or lameness.

At one moment, late in the book (p. 165), Rosenblatt drops the pose of futility in raising principled questions about abortion. One man in Iowa tells him that the question of abortion will "have to turn on the viability of the life." But Rosenblatt points out, in response, that the matter of viability must ever be dependent on the state of the art in technology, and besides, he asks, "Why should one's position on choice be any [different] in principle if the baby is viable after two months or two days?" Suddenly it appears that it is indeed possible after all to raise the most demanding questions in testing the principled justifications for abortion. But that is a capacity that Rosenblatt kept decorously hidden from his readers until the last 15 pages of his book—and for evident reason. For if it were possible to raise this kind of question at all, it could be raised across the board, in testing every claim that is put forward about the circumstances in which abortion can be justified.

BUT THAT, as I say, is not all that Rosenblatt has been willing to leave concealed. First, there is the grand pretense that the opinions of ordinary Americans, disclosed in the interviews and surveys, would support the law created by the Court in *Roe* v. *Wade*, the law that Rosenblatt would now seek to embed in our statutes. But as one longtime student of these polls has summed up the findings, over 60 per cent of the public would reject 90 per cent of the abortions that are performed under *Roe* v. *Wade*. That is a point Rosenblatt manages to conceal, artfully, from his readers by concealing or misrepresenting the law created by *Roe* v. *Wade*. Rosenblatt is content to repeat the line that became familiar in the popular press: that *Roe* v. *Wade* secured to the woman an unrestricted right of abortion in the first three months of the pregnancy; but thereafter the states were free to impose restrictions, and even prohibitions, on abortion. What Rosenblatt conveniently leaves out is the way in which these calibrations in *Roe* v. *Wade* were overridden, or rendered null, in the companion case of *Doe* v. *Bolton*. Justice Blackmun announced there that the interest of the State in protecting unborn children may nevertheless be overcome, at any stage, by a concern for the "life and health" of the mother; and he went on to explain that the notion of "health" encompassed "all factors—physical, emotional, psychological." In other words, any woman who would suffer distress if she were denied an abortion would have a right to the surgery.

In a book surveying the laws on abortion, these are facts that Rosenblatt did not think important enough to convey to his readers. But beyond the layers of subterfuge, there are more telling lessons to be found in the understandings he managed to

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conceal from himself. The reader might ponder with fascination the layers of incomprehension reflected in these "commentaries": "I am ready to concede," he writes, "that a fetus is some form of person." But "no one has ever been able to prove when a person comes into being." Let us put aside the rich record of what we have come to know, quite precisely, about that person in the womb, from the first neuroanatomy of the fetus about two hundred years ago, to the mapping of the EEG from the fetal brain, to the wonders of embryology and the things we have come to know about the genetic composition of the zygote. Let us, as I say, put all of that aside. Mr. Rosenblatt has written a tract on abortion. His book must suppose, as a necessary predicate, that we can know when an abortion is even relevant to the condition of a patient, as opposed, say, to an appendectomy. The evidence that indicates the relevance of an abortion is the evidence supplied in a pregnancy test. And what that test measures is an ongoing, self-sustaining process of growth. What he concedes to be a human being has begun to live. If it were not launched, decisively, on the process of generation, there would be no need for surgery. If it were a tumor, the surgical "remedy" would not be an abortion. What has apparently escaped the notice of Mr. Rosenblatt is that his book requires, *as a necessary presupposition*, that we know exactly "when a person comes into being," for otherwise we cannot know the existence of a "pregnancy," and we cannot know that an abortion is any more relevant to a woman than a haircut. Mr. Rosenblatt reminds me of a former colleague, a confirmed skeptic, of whom we used to say that he would not claim, confidently, to know that he himself existed, though he was bitterly certain that his check from Blue Cross was late.

Random House, that most urbane of publishers, has offered a work on the assumption that the reading public is composed of hicks, with inexhaustible layers of gullibility. If there is a puzzle here, the answer may be found on the dustjacket of the book. There, it is announced that Mr. Rosenblatt "has become widely recognized as America's pre-eminent commentator on social and moral issues." For the rest of the country, this may come as a surprise, but the announcement reveals the state of mind from which it springs. That claim can issue only from a mind that holds that "the word" constitutes reality, that saying something is so virtually makes it so. Grasp that premise, and everything else falls into place: the same publisher could announce to the public, without sheepishness, that we do not know when a human life begins; that the desire for an abortion establishes the "need"; that any need for an abortion makes it justified; and that for abortions alone, among all acts of moral consequence, it is not possible to judge when the act may be justified or unjustified. Those are sentiments that would embarrass even Boobus Americanus. □

Some Call It Treason

ROBERT ELEGANT

Katherine Trunk

MIRACLES, delivered almost as regularly as the morning milk, have kept Hong Kong alive during the four decades I have known Britain's last Crown Colony. Miracles have also made her prosperous.

How else would a territory of four hundred square miles with no natural resources, not even water, have become one of the world's major manufacturing, trading, and financial centers? It was, further, at least a demi-miracle for her relentless commercialism (read: *enlightened greed*) to have shaped a civilized society where the pleasures of intellectual endeavors and the arts are not scorned, although subordinated to the pleasures of the table, dining and gaming. (That is, among the 96 per cent of her people who are Chinese—not the "expatriates," there just for the money.)

Perfidious Albion, by William McGurn (Ethics and Public Policy Center, 164 pp., $16.95)

Hong Kong has been nurtured by miracles since her birth 150 years ago. Unless another miracle intervenes, she will perish in June 1997 by the hand of her creator, Great Britain.

As William McGurn points out in his scathing indictment of the Hong Kong policy of the Conservative government, the British took the territory for ignoble purposes and are now cravenly surrendering it to the uncertain mercies of Chinese Communist rule for the same purposes.

In the nineteenth century the British were driven by commercial greed to defy the Chinese Imperial government's ban on the importation of opium. They seized Hong Kong Island as a base for that illicit trade—and later acquired bits of the mainland to further facilitate trade, licit and illicit, notably pocket-handkerchief Kowloon and the substantial New Territories.

The New Territories were leased to Britain by Imperial China until 1997. The Peking regime, which does not recognize the lease as valid, has nonetheless used its imminent expiry to lever all Hong Kong out of Britain's failing grasp.

Under no more than diplomatic pressure, the British have agreed to turn the entire territory over to China. Why?

Britain has no stomach for a fight, even a fight largely verbal. In equal part, a Britain that is having its own racial troubles sees no reason to exert itself on behalf of millions of another color. Above all, however, the policymakers expect their eager acquiescence to Peking's takeover of a territory that China never truly ruled to yield great profits in future trade.

Mr. Elegant, a novelist and journalist, is the author of Pacific Destiny.

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Having made that judgment, the British have been not merely accommodating, but obsequious, indeed fawning, in their efforts to please the Chinese. After all, their purpose in giving Hong Kong to a power whose benevolence is not visible to the naked eye is not to generate ill will. It is just too bad if their purpose conflicts with the interests of millions who have lived all their lives under British law as British subjects.

Peking has promised that the present legal and economic system will endure unchanged for at least fifty years. But Hong Kong's people cannot credit any promise made by that regime, their skepticism having been learned in the school of experience.

Moreover, they *know* that Hong Kong cannot be the same; the flight of capital, companies, and skilled individuals has already depreciated the efficiency that was to my mind once the highest in the world. They know further that the men of Peking are incapable of not interfering, even if their promises were sincere, which there is no reason to believe.

To sweeten the pill, London offered full British passports to fifty thousand British subjects whose existing British passports—by a recent act of Parliament—did not entitle them to live in Britain. Despite a nearly universal desire to get out of Hong Kong before the Communists took over, few applied. The general view of the once-respected British was too jaundiced.

Hong Kong has not found a way out, but in William McGurn she has, at least, found another champion. His is a very modern Jeremiad. He does not merely prophesy doom, but, first-class journalist that he is, pounds away with facts that refute the anodyne half-truths and untruths uttered by Britain's policy-makers as they complacently accept the knighthoods and peerages that are the rewards for their "services."

The truth is in the details—and Mr. McGurn is great on details, far too copious to cite. Delectably quotable, however, is his observation on the conditions necessary to make plausible the official Sino-British contention that the people of Hong Kong will be just as well off under a benevolent Chinese government after the takeover in 1997: ". . . China had to project a modernizing and liberalizing image; Hong Kongers had to remain passive; and both sides had to gloss over the immense practical difficulties of reconciling a Western-style colony characterized by a free market and broad individual freedoms with a Marxist system that had no such experience. Above all, what was required was a gentlemen's agreement not to ask too many questions."

The fig leaf thus contrived was flimsy. It became transparent when it got wet—with the massacre in Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989.

Cynical or not, the men who sold out Hong Kong defend their deed with vigor. Several years ago, before Tiananmen, one of the chief architects told me he foresaw disorder in China. When I asked if that forecast did not portend, at the least, hardship for a Hong Kong under Chinese rule, he replied flatly: "No!"

Another architect recently boasted to a senior Chinese official that he had persuaded Margaret Thatcher to accept the agreement on surrendering Hong Kong, which she had initially opposed. "I explained to her that it was not a matter of self-determination," he said. "Not like the Falklands."

In the face of such self-serving self-delusion, not to speak of Britain's forceful blocking, at Chinese behest, of any movement toward democracy in Hong Kong, it is hard to believe that the United States can make much difference. Mr. McGurn, however, argues that the U.S., the largest investor in Hong Kong aside from Japan, can at least influence both China and Britain to grant greater internal democracy to the territory. More nearly popular rule would presumably enable the people to resist more effectively the exactions of their new rulers.

I find that argument just as plausible—no more, no less—as another prevalent contention: that Hong Kong, whose influence is unquestionably altering South China radically, will by 1997 have altered all China fundamentally—and that the greatly reformed China will run an enlightened administration in Hong Kong.

Whatever the value of such theses, Mr. McGurn has abundantly justified his title: *Perfidious Albion.* □

Pelikan's School Daze

THOMAS SHORT

JAROSLAV Pelikan, Sterling Professor of History at Yale University, is an eminent and much-honored scholar. His numerous books on theology and the history of Christianity exhibit a depth of erudition rarely seen. In addition, he has done time in administration, as dean of Yale's graduate school. So, who better to address the crisis in American higher education? That Pelikan dares to address that crisis (his own word for it) through a meditation on Cardinal Newman's famous essay "The Idea of a University," is an additional reason to hope that this is the book we've been waiting for. Alas, it is less a prescription for a cure than another symptom of the disease.

The Idea of the University: A Reexamination, by Jaroslav Pelikan (Yale, 238 pp., $30)

Not that Pelikan is one of that dreary gang whose mantra is "race, class, gender." Nor is he to be found among the zany revelers in the higher cobwebs of "post-structuralist" whatnot. The former subordinate education to politics and the latter deny any possibility of knowing anything anyway. Pelikan, by contrast, accepts Newman's principle that knowledge is its own end, to be sought without regard to its social utility.

Nonutilitarian education turns out to be the most useful sort, though, especially in teaching citizens to think for themselves. Quoting Newman, Pelikan says that "that training of the intellect, which is best for the individual himself, best enables him to discharge his duties to society." The job of educator, then, is not to reform society but to educate it.

The multiculturalists, Afrocentrists, sensitivity trainers, feminists, and gay-rights activists see it differently.

Mr. Short gave up tenure at Kenyon College to become executive editor of Academic Questions, *the journal of the National Association of Scholars.*

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They believe that the purpose of education is to wage war on capitalism and democracy. Unfortunately, rather than assail the PC legions, Pelikan simply ignores them. He fails even to mention radical feminism, deconstructionism, and multiculturalism. Thus, he fails to confront the flesh-and-blood enemies of Newman's principles.

Worse yet, Pelikan dismisses with briefest mention those—such as Allan Bloom, Charles Sykes, Roger Kimball, and Dinesh D'Souza—who *have* identified the academy's barbarians within. In a chapter on "The Storm Breaking upon the University: The University in Crisis," Pelikan admits no crisis at all, except for a crisis, as he puts it, of "self-confidence." His message seems to be that the university's only error is to have taken its critics too seriously.

Like many other scholars and scientists—especially the most successful and best established—Pelikan can pursue his research and teaching barely affected by the disaster spreading around him. He and they occupy an ivory tower within the ivory tower. And the real purpose of his book is to preserve that tower from reformers who might go too far in sacrificing research to better teaching. The importance of research to the life of the university is the major corollary Pelikan draws from Newman's principle—a difference at least of emphasis from Newman's own conclusion, which stressed teaching.

But after adumbrating the obvious implications of those views, what is there left for him to say? Having fled from the university's most dangerous enemies, he in fact is left with little to say. The final third of the book considers the university's relation to society—and ducks all the hard questions.

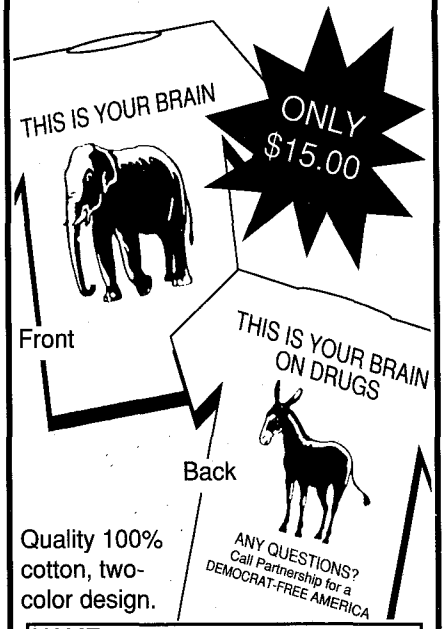
Affirmative action, for example, is never mentioned, though it is addressed by implication in Chapter 14. Quoting from the public-relations documents of Egyptian, South African, Greek, and Philippine universities, as well as dozens of authors from Tocqueville to Gerard Manley Hopkins, Pelikan concludes that "the university must go on being able to identify, and then attract and hold, those relatively few individuals, regardless of race or class or gender, whose 'virtues and talents' give promise of advancing knowledge . . ." etc., etc. We can drink to that. But from this book the public will never learn that race has been substituted for ability in colleges and universities all across America, at every level of student and faculty recruitment.

Pelikan's disengagement from the real battle is evident even in his style. He never says anything himself if he can quote another saying it instead or, better yet, Scholar A correcting a comment by Scholar B on a passage from Ancient Sage C, described by D as having. . . The reader feels like a witness to a revolt of the footnotes: tired of being at the bottom of the page, they have clambered up into the text and taken it over. And while there is pleasure in palpating the dense texture of reference piled on reference, often one has to read the same sentence three times before plucking its point out of the medley of voices that express it. This is not writing that is meant to have an effect.

The university is where, as Pelikan quotes Newman, "a habit of mind is formed which lasts through life." But what habits of mind are being formed today? From some professors students can learn to reduce every intellectual issue to a simplistic question of who is oppressing whom. And from many of our best scholars, such as Jaroslav Pelikan, they can learn to enjoy a fool's paradise.

If this book shows anything it is that the academy is an exoskeletal organism: its spine will have to come from outside. □

"Okay, one more time..."



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In Bed with Mrs. Roosevelt

FLORENCE KING

TO QUALIFY as a feminist heroine a woman must meet three tests. She must have a successful career "in her own right"; she must be "assertive and aggressive"; and she must have a pre-, extra-, or non-marital sex life, preferably ambidextrous.

What to do with Poor Nell, who did

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not even need to go through the trauma of changing her maiden name? Poor Nell, nicknamed "Granny" as a child and "Patient Griselda" as a young wife, who slept on the doormat rather than wake the servants. Poor Nell, whose sons claimed she didn't know what a lesbian was, whose daughter said she regarded marital relations as "an ordeal to be borne," and whose cousin, Alice Roosevelt Long-

Eleanor Roosevelt: Vol. I, 1884–1933, by Blanche Wiesen Cook (Viking, 587 pp., $27.50)

worth, present at the doormat incident, remembered her "rising like a string bean that had been raised in a cellar."

Women's Studies professor Blanche Wiesen Cook blames this politically incorrect image of ER on stereotypes, such as the one that sets the tone of this book: "White, Protestant, aristocratic, and 'unattractive' women are not supposed to flourish in the political arena, and are not presumed to have sex or independently passionate interests."

Unliberated women lock their bedroom doors and go without sex to punish straying husbands, but feminist heroines do not, so we must revise our assumptions about the aftermath of FDR's dalliance with Lucy Mercer. "Was there anything left between them? Was there love? Could there be trust? Could they start over? Might they even try?"

Yes, Miss Cook says, they did. She is sure of it, because the only evidence for a post-Lucy sexless marriage comes from daughter Anna and sons James and Elliott, who *said* their parents stopped sleeping together: "But children are unreliable sources concerning their parents' sexuality, and are particularly vulnerable to the historical stereotype that conjures up the frigid mother and the deprived father."

Age does not wither feminist heroines, so at 45 ER had an affair with 32-year-old Earl Miller, the New York State trooper who served as her bodyguard during FDR's governorship. Miss Cook can't prove it because somebody burned their letters—she knows not who, but she knows why. "There are two stereotypes at play here: frumpy older women do not have sex—because they cannot; aristocratic women do not—because they will not." She is sure ER did, however, and bolsters her contention by quoting James Roosevelt, one of those unreliable child sources she dismissed earlier, who wrote: "I believe there may have been one real romance in mother's life outside of marriage. Mother may have had an affair with Earl Miller."

ER certainly knew what a lesbian was because she had an "inevitable and undeniable" affair with AP reporter Lorena Hickok, a victim of "hateful stereotypes" due to her homeliness. Hick had already had an affair with contralto Ernestine Schumann-Heink, a victim of the fat-opera-singer stereotype, whose favorite encore was *Sapphische Ode*.

Surviving letters between ER and Hick prove they went to bed, Miss Cook insists, "although Hickok typed, edited, and then burned the originals of ER's letters between 1932 and 1933," when the alleged affair was at its height. Having said that, Miss Cook blithely ignores the possibility that the feverishly romantic Hick might have "retyped" the affair into being. Certainly a number of phrases simply don't sound like ER. The "Oh! Darling!" passages and maudlin love poems are tasteless enough, but what really rouses suspicions is a phrase that reeks of middle-class fallen archness: "So endeth my first Sunday."

Lesbianism is often on the author's mind and she goes out of her way to find it, even hinting that Elliott Roosevelt's sister—ER's Aunt Corinne—had some sort of passionate interlude with her brother's mistress, to whom she wrote overheated poems that ER kept and cherished. This is supposed to prove how worldly ER was on the subject, but in case we still don't get it, we are told that ER was the model for a character in *Olivia*, a lesbian schoolgirl novel by her old classmate, Dorothy Strachey.

Miss Cook goes positively ga-ga when she describes ER's lesbian friends, Esther Lape and Elizabeth Read. Rich liberal activists who held court in Greenwich Village, they "celebrated excellence in food and champagne, art and conversation. They were passionate about music and theater. Cut flowers in great profusion decorated their homes in the city and

Miss King is the author of With Charity Toward None: A Fond Look at Misanthropy *(St. Martin's).*

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the country. Their candle-lit dinners were formal, splendidly served, and spiced by controversy." Less elegant were carpenter Nancy Cook and teacher Marion Dickerman, whom a jealous ER froze out when FDR demonstrated that he could turn even a lesbian into a handmaiden. As Miss Dickerman later recalled: "Never in my life have I met so utterly charming a man"; it seemed to her "only right and natural that people should devote themselves heart and soul to him and his career."

What the author doesn't know she manages to suggest without violating the rules of scholarly research. While the orphaned adolescent ER was living with her father's family, "three strong, very protective locks were installed on the door of her room. Was she ever hurt or abused? Did Uncle Vallie or Uncle Eddie ever actually get into her room? What kind of battle ensued?" Thus, Miss Cook plants the idea of rape when all she really knows is that the uncles were such reeling drunks that they easily could have entered the wrong room by mistake.

Despite Miss Cook's efforts to paint ER as a political titan, she still comes across as one of those freelance female activists, with a finger in every agenda, that *Nightline* calls on whenever Something Happens. The real towering female figure here, as in every Roosevelt book, is Sara Delano, whom even this author treats with grudging admiration. The disappearance of full-sailed *grandes dames* has left a void in democracy's heart that mere assertive feminists can never fill. □

News She Can Use

DAVID KLINGHOFFER

MORE and more during the 1980s, Joan Didion has preferred to stay home and read the newspaper. This is not to say the famous journalist has become a hermit. During the past decade she has kept homes in two cities—New York and Los Angeles—plus a vacation place in Hawaii. Also, rather than the other way around, famous people now pay calls on *her*. During the recent primary here in New York, Jerry Brown stayed not in a hotel, but with Joan Didion. Nor—again, to be fair—did all her information come from newspapers. She watched TV, too.

***After Henry*, by Joan Didion (Simon & Schuster, 319 pp., $22)**

Anthony Martin

Instead of one of the most devastating reporters in America, Miss Didion has turned into a media critic. She can still be devastating, as she is in the best essays in this new collection. Writing about the 1988 presidential election for *The New York Review of Books*, in a piece called "Insider Baseball," she has a way of slicing effortlessly through the fatty tissue to get straight to the vital organs.

"Insider Baseball" isn't about the election itself, but the coverage of the election. So, for instance, she reports about the "ball-toss" staged at one point by the Dukakis campaign. On an airport tarmac in San Diego, Dukakis tossed a baseball to his press secretary, repeating the "toss" several times in order to get it right for the TV cameras. As witnesses to the "eerily contrived event," journalists then filed stories describing something altogether different: a spontaneous moment of fun for the suddenly "jaunty" governor, as Joe Klein called him in *New York* magazine. Getting out into the air for what must have been at least a week, and simply comparing reality with reported reality, Miss Didion caught reporters in the act again and again.

"What we had in the tarmac arrival with ball tossing, then," she writes, "was an understanding: a repeated moment witnessed by many people, all of whom believed it to be a setup and yet most of whom believed that only an outsider, only someone too 'naïve' to know the rules of the game, would so describe it. . . . The narrative is made up of many such understandings, tacit agreements, small and large, to overlook the observable in the interest of obtaining a dramatic story line."

Narratives and story lines—false, sentimental, usually pathetic—are a longtime obsession for Miss Didion. Instead of recognizing the apparent randomness of events, she thinks, people tell themselves stories, to force a meaning on it all. What she finds most disconcerting about Los Angeles, the city that is the subject of this book's middle third, is that its residents lack a common sense of narrative. As she puts it in "Times Mirror Square," first published in *The New Yorker*, ". . . there is in Los Angeles no memory everyone shares, no monument everyone knows, no historical references meaningful as the long sweep of the ramps where the San Diego and Santa Monica freeways intersect, as the way the hard Santa Ana light strikes the palm trees against the white western wall of the Carnation Milk building on Wilshire Boulevard."

In "Sentimental Journeys," about the rape of the Central Park jogger, she convincingly describes the way the New York papers focused on the ensuing trial as a kind of symbolic theatrical play, depicting the rape of their city by "crime" and its redemption by law enforcement. This was a way of avoiding—by sentimentalization—the things Miss Didion believes are truly wrong with New York: the levels of bureaucracy, corruption, and taxation, which rival those of the most squalid Third World capitals.

Since she began thinking this way, in the late Sixties, Miss Didion has definitely been on to something. Since then, she's been writing the same sort of icily compelling prose—exact, often exhilarating but never exhilarated, baleful but never outraged, or even miffed in the manner of so much lib-

Mr. Klinghoffer is NR*'s Associate Literary Editor.*

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eral political and social reporting. There is in her writing an instantly recognizable personality: somehow disappointed, almost amused. You only have to see a few of her words, particular usages she has made almost exclusively her own—a way of using the verb "tended," the adjective "certain," the phrases "it was understood," "it was said," "I recall"—to know you're reading Joan Didion. Among journalists, she remains master of the single, luminous, knock-out detail.

In its opening piece, "After Henry," she dedicates this book to Henry Robbins, her first editor, who convinced her as a young writer that she could "sit down alone and do it." She still can. The difference between Joan Didion now and then is reflected in the startling number of sentences in *After Henry* that begin like this: "The schedule [of George Bush, on a trip on which Miss Didion did not accompany him] in Israel included, according to reports in the *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times*, . . ." How much time must she spend every day just washing the newsprint off her fingers?

In *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* (1968), her first collection, Miss Didion visited Joan Baez's Institute for the Study of Nonviolence and Robert Maynard Hutchins's even more absurd Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions. While maintaining her posture as the always-outsider, she hung out with hippies, and observed U.S. military men as they whored it up, boozed it up, and then memorialized the experience with tattoos on Hotel Street in Honolulu. Now for news of the world Miss Didion mainly turns to the *New York Times*.

That habit has led her into a major conceptual error. She has begun to conflate the views of the press with the views of the population at large. When she says something is "universally understood," another characteristic Didion phrase, she now means "understood by the media." When she says "the city's interest [in the jogger case] had by then largely waned," she means the media's interest had waned.

Twenty years ago, Miss Didion wouldn't have made that mistake. Readers of her earlier, and more exhilarating, work will regret that the reality of Joan Didion is now generally grey in color, and characterized by parallel columns running down either side of it. They will miss the greater comedy and sadness of real lives observed at first hand. Won't someone pull the chair out from under this woman? □

And the Moral Is . . .

RICHARD BROOKHISER

IS IT so many years ago already that Jay McInerney was one of a movement, or at least a trio, a brat pack of bright young writers? It is. For Bret Easton Ellis has proved himself to be a stupid brute, and Tama Janowitz, who for hundred-yard dashes was the best of the three, seems to have disappeared. Only McInerney remains.

Not that he hasn't had his problems. After *Bright Lights, Big City* devoured the world, the reviewers, who had helped it in its rampage, lay in wait for his next productions. They assailed *Story of My Life*—unfairly, since it was a harder book to pull off than *Bright Lights*, and McInerney had done it: the narrator of the earlier book was a rather winning young man, while the narrator of the later was an even younger girl, her head stuffed with clichés and garbage, and yet her story managed to be something other than an extended joke at her expense.

Brightness Falls, by Jay McInerney (Knopf, 416 pp., $23)

Brightness Falls, a more ambitious tale, has a hero and a heroine. Russell Calloway is an amiable young man with a tendency to be emotionally obtuse, who once thought he might be a poet, but who became instead the heir apparent at a prestigious publishing house where the crown-princely role has begun to irk him. His wife, the for-

Mr. Brookhiser is an NR *Senior Editor and a columnist for the* New York Observer.

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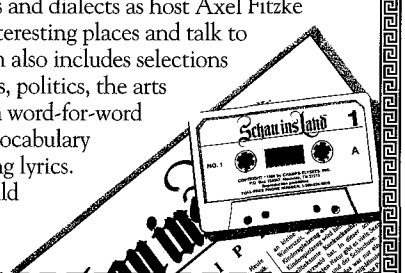

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mer Corrine Makepeace, is a bit of a masochist, which you'd have to be to love Russell as he is at the novel's beginning. She works on Wall Street, at the height of the money fever. We know, and she suspects, what is coming along about October 1987. The Calloways are headed for a crash of their own, brought on by "the tragedy of monogamy," which is "that passion cannot be sustained forever, though other compensations might replace it."

The backdrop ranges from the high life of mergers and acquisitions, which we sample when Russell decides to buy his own company, to the low life of bums, courtesy of Corrine's weekly stints at a soup kitchen. The minor characters who populate this spectrum are entertaining, even when melodramatic. The best is Victor Propp, one of Russell's authors, a classic Jewish depressive who is rather like Harold Brodkey, though his long awaited novel turns out to be more like Truman Capote's. Here is Propp, musing on the heady times:

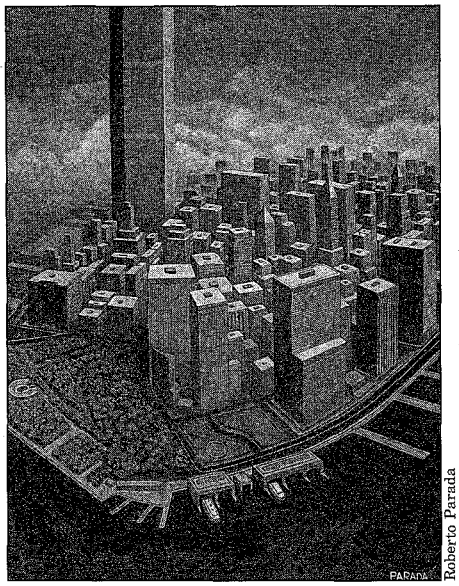
> No free lunch. Who said it first? . . . It had the pithy quality of a Ben Franklinism. But wasn't that really what it meant to be an American, to believe above all in the free lunch? Dialectically opposed to the Puritan ethic and every bit as firmly fixed in the national psyche was the bedrock belief in something for nothing, the idea that five would get you ten. . . . In a small notebook, Victor wrote *Free Lunch . . . Manifest Destiny . . . American Mind.*

Another vivid, if fantastic, supporting figure is Trina Cox, a young Wall Street predatress whom Russell enlists to mastermind his takeover bid, and who has the following interview with a tycoon.

> She fought her way up out of the chair. "This trick peekaboo chair is bulls---, Bernie. You want to see my stuff? Be a man about it. You want to see it?" Trina lifted her skirt up over her hips . . .

Shwing! Will Russell take over his publishing house? Will he take Trina? Will Trina take him? Turn the page.

McInerney has been writing about F. Scott Fitzgerald recently, and there are several references in *Brightness Falls* to *The Great Gatsby*. The comparison they invite strikes me as wrongheaded. Fitzgerald's best prose is allusive, while McInerney's is epigrammatic. Fitzgerald's subject was the pathos of illusions—their power to



inspire, and their inevitable disappointment—while McInerney is at heart a moralist: if you behave or think badly, bad things will happen to you. (Fitzgerald moralized too, but not at his best.)

Two things tend to tug McInerney off course in this book. One is the urge to moralize on too grand a scale. His political and social judgments lack the necessary emotional and intellectual gravity, which he tries to make up for with research, *à la* Tom Wolfe. It didn't work for Wolfe either, at least not in this way. I was amused to note that two of the Wall Street insiders mentioned in McInerney's "Acknowledgments" were people I had interviewed for the Wall Street chapter of *The Way of the WASP*. Next stop for McInerney is an essay in *Harper's*, explaining how Zola himself went down into the coal mines.

A more serious temptation is the implication that the woes of the world are inevitable. So they are, in the aggregate. But particular woes may not be inevitable at all. If "the tragedy of monogamy" comes to everyone, does messing up your marriage? There are times in *Brightness Falls* when McInerney writes as if he thinks so. The title, to take another example, comes from a line of Thomas Nashe's "A Litany in Time of Plague," recited at the funeral of a minor character who awkwardly becomes a major one in the homestretch. But the young man dies, not from plague, but because he prowled around Alphabet City, sticking needles into his arms. Moralists should be made of tougher stuff.

Maybe McInerney will be the next time out. It's worth waiting to see. □

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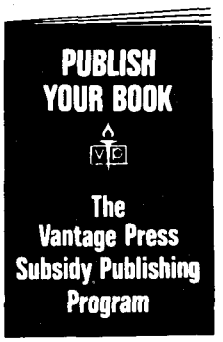

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Ranck on a Roll

WM. F. BUCKLEY JR.

GERALD RANCK began to play the Scarlatti sonatas (Kk 1–30) at 3 in the afternoon of May 10. He took a short intermission after Sonata 18 and at 5:35 he finished Kk 30—superb musical judgment, because the G-minor is played at moderate speed, and so left the audience with a lyrical decompressant after the furies that came immediately before.

It isn't easy to communicate the hair-raising complexity of so many of the Scarlatti sonatas. There is little to be said for trying to compete with the description of them done by the late Ralph Kirkpatrick, an interpreter and a biographer of Domenico Scarlatti. He wrote:

> Iberian and Italian elements appear to be almost equally balanced. Some of the pieces are as dry and bony as any sun-baked Mediterranean landscape. Others alternate lyric echoes of Italian opera and mock tears in descending chromatics with scherzando leaps and arpeggios. In some sonatas the brittle tensions and intoxicating rhythms of the Spanish dance are heightened by the wail of a harsh flamenco voice accompanied by guitars and castanets and punctuated by shouts of olé and the cross accents of stamping feet. A sonata like Kk 20 recalls the orchestras of small Spanish towns with their shrill wind instruments: breathy overblown flutes, squealing provincial oboes, and percussive basses like tight drums, almost like cannon shots. Sometimes in others a jangling of tambourines is interrupted by a resounding thump of the guitar. There is no limit to the imaginary sounds evoked by Scarlatti's harpsichord. Many of them extend far beyond the domain of musical instruments into an impressionistic transcription of the sounds of daily life: of street cries, church bells, tapping of dancing feet, fireworks, artillery, in such varied and fluid form that any attempt to describe them precisely in words results in colorful and embarrassing nonsense.

The auspices that Sunday afternoon were the New York Society for Ethical Culture (2 West 64th Street), with its perfect chamber auditorium, which seats about seven hundred. The occasion? Well, historic. Because Gerald Ranck is undertaking something never before done so far as we know. When the series is completed he will have performed all of Scarlatti's sonatas, of which there are—555. His next concert will be on September 13, and thereafter he will play once every month, September to May, for three years. This summer he will need to master 250 sonatas. This is on the order of undertaking, by Labor Day, to memorize the Old Testament.

New York is a funny place. On the one hand you can't imagine an enterprise on so heroic a scale being undertaken anywhere else. Perhaps it is for this reason that the city is blasé, well, beyond forgiveness. There were exactly ninety people there to hear, and to be transfixed by, the overwhelming music described by Kirkpatrick, and to be awed by the modest superartist, with his great blond beard, who performed feats that would dizzy a mainframe computer. And there was *zero* mention of the event in that morning's 687-page *New York Times*. So-what time, the cultural overseers of New York life seemed to be saying about a musical feat never before undertaken.

There are lots of people in greater New York who love the special music made by a harpsichord; but not many who will actually get up to go to a harpsichord concert. What they do is listen to the harpsichord on records, and over the radio. The life of a harpsichord musician in the late twentieth century tells what life must have been like for almost all musicians in the eighteenth century. Bach, Handel, and Scarlatti all were born in 1685, the most momentous coincidence since the death on the same day of Shakespeare and Cervantes. Johann Sebastian Bach probably didn't draw larger audiences than Gerald Ranck, except when playing in church, to which the people came not because they loved Bach but because they feared the Lord.

Gerald Ranck has dedicated his series to Sylvia Marlowe and Fernando

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Valenti. Sylvia Marlowe was in the tradition of Wanda Landowska and Jimmy Durante, a great showman (showperson?). But even she didn't permit herself much more than one or two recitals in great big cosmopolitan New York, where if you want a crowd, it makes sense to be Pavarotti or Horowitz. Fernando Valenti died broke and forgotten. I would be surprised if there is a harpsichordist in America who makes a living on the safe side of the poverty line. What they need to do is to teach, or to make records; or both.

It is a most awful pity, because people who can hear and who are receptive to musical magic, and can appreciate spellbinding virtuosity, simply do not know what they are missing, and they are not going to find out about it from the *New York Times* (though come to think of it, I published an essay there a few years ago on harpsichord music). The happy few can only rejoice that there is a little band out there who devote their lives to enthralling the ninety-odd people who attend their concerts. □

DELECTATIONS

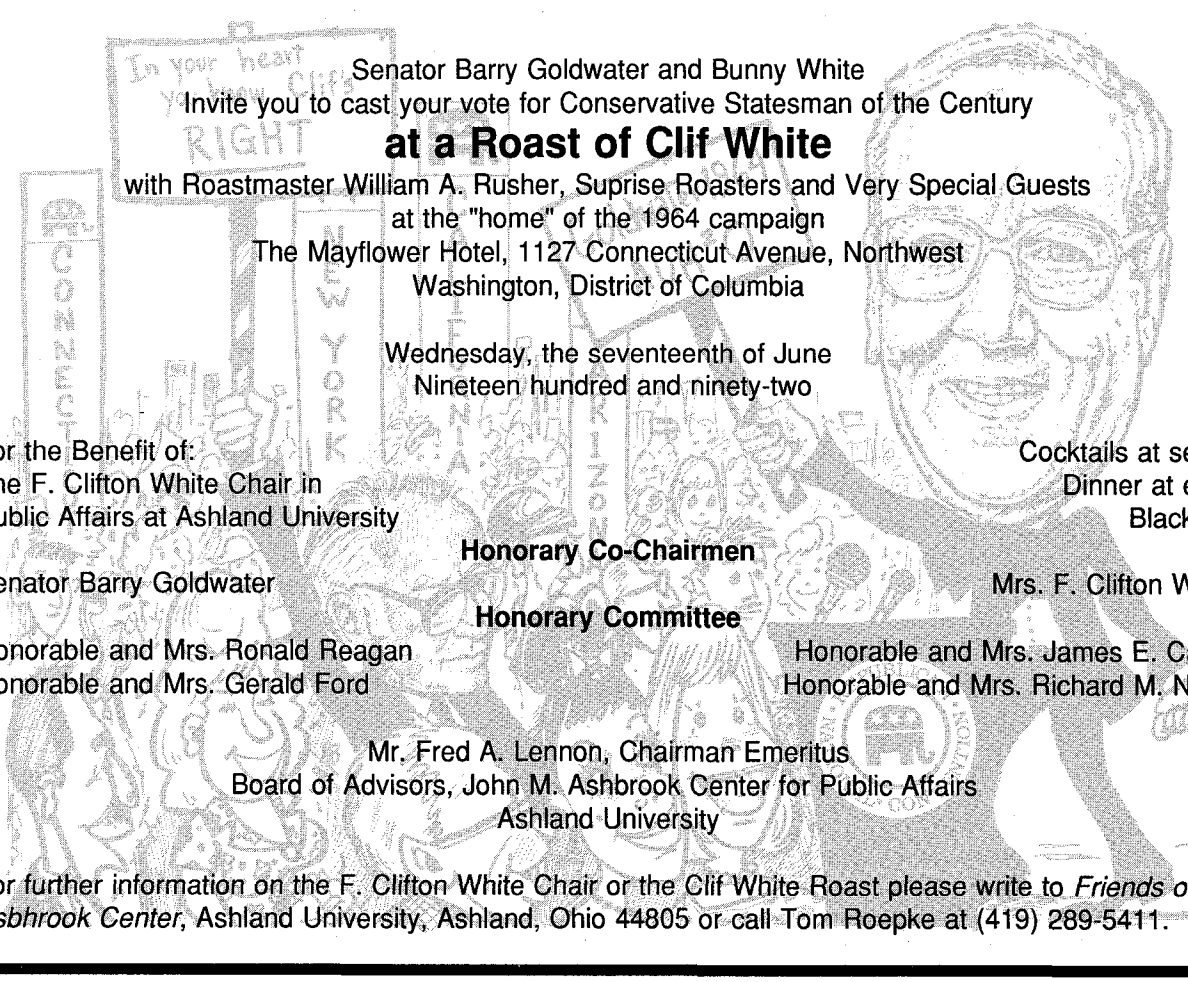
For a Tuna Tutorial

DIGBY ANDERSON

AFTER revisiting the Holy City —Charleston—and other parts of the Southern seaboard recently, I have a suggestion for improving the food there. Now, before anyone gets red in the face, I said "improve," for much of what I was served was quite promising. But it could be better. What it needs is the importation of a few shiploads of Sicilians and Andalucians: not manacled, you understand, quite the reverse, granted a special exemption from health and other state regulations so they can get to work exploiting the wonderful raw materials—the shrimp, clams, oysters, crabs, rice, grouper, tuna—in cafés in every park and street corner.

For the South and much else of America has a problem. Those who eat out in restaurants or at friends' are caught on a fork of two extremes. There is plain food—freshly caught shrimp boiled, grouper grilled, undressed salad. With this, one has the option of adding fortunately separate but countless packets or buckets of unmentionable sewage dressings, disgusting garlic bread made with powdered garlic, drawn rather bad butter, house sauce which is mildly reformed ketchup, and various cheese biscuits. There will also be lots of ice about, usually under raw oysters and clams to ensure that one cannot appreciate the taste of the shellfish, and compulsory music of the sort pleasing to lower-class young persons. The cul-

Mr. Anderson is food columnist for The Spectator *(London), and the author of* The Spectator Book of Imperative Cooking.



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tured eater throws away all the garbage, sauces, dressings, and ice, sits as far away from the loudspeaker as possible, asks for and fails to get some decent bread and olive oil, keeps his salad back to have in the proper place after the fish, thereby confusing "Hi, I'm your server, Debbie—is everything okay?," but at least finishes up with very good shrimp and grouper at a very fair price. It's just that this aggressively plain fare gets a bit much after a dozen more such meals.

The alternative is far worse: more expensive and pretentiously, even revoltingly mucked-about food. I give you some gems taken from actual menus: dolphin with melon and pineapple; duck liver terrine with dried cherry, carmelized turnip compote; fresh Yonges Island spinach with apple vinaigrette, roasted pecans and blue cheese; Mesclun green house salad—sounds all right so far, but wait—with roasted—yes, roasted, really, I assure you, roasted—shallot vinaigrette; black-bean crepe with sauteed veal and pork in a light cream sauce on red pepper coulis and pepper relish; and my favorite, Dover sole with scallop mousse and basil mustard hollandaise.

Basil? Fine. A light mustard sauce? Possibly, but not of course with the basil. Hollandaise? Certainly, one of the best sauces, if made properly, so good it must stand on its own. But all three, and with scallops and whatever is in the mousse! However well executed, these recipes are in pathetically bad taste. Oscar Wilde's dictum about the sin of overdressing applies even more to food than to clothes. Only the most common people do it.

So if we are to do something about the problem, we have to forget the overdressed and work on the plain. Sicilians and Andalucians have similar raw ingredients though in nowhere near the abundance, and have evolved wonderful ways of cooking them. What they would do when they arrived is this. The Eyeties will immediately improve the bread and set to work on deliciously lightly fried fishes and shrimp. Out go the packets of biscuits and the garlic powder. The Andalucians will get out their planchas and set to work turning out wonderful shrimp grilled with a little lemon and olive and fresh garlic, clams with a drop of sherry or a pinch of pimentón. The salad will come washed but, more important, made with lettuce that tastes of something and dried and dressed with plain wine vinegar, olive oil, pepper, and salt. And what either could do with the rice—in risotti and what are incorrectly called paellas, is no one's business. They would, of course, be courses in themselves, not a sort of vegetable serving, nudged up against some boring watery squash and a pile of boiled corn all massing to flatten the taste of the grouper, tuna, or swordfish. They would serve real coffee, not brown water.

I must be fair and say there would be costs as well. They would get rid of the lower-class music but replace it with tedious castanets and wailings (in the case of the Andalucians). The service would be slower (good) but less efficient (bad). There might not be menus. And one should take care that they are not allowed to set up yet more full-scale "Italian" restaurants selling the dull diet so many in the U.S. do. What we want is the chaps who operate shacks on street corners or beach bars. If you can get them, what you can be sure of is that they will not muck the food about. That is not the Mediterranean way. The changes made to, especially, fish cooked there are small but of tremendous value.

It is this lesson that Americans, and indeed the British, have to learn, a *via media*—this column is always moderate—between plainness and pretentiousness. That, the Mediterraneans can teach. They will need to be given their head, though—no regulations, bureaucrats persecuting them for having used toothpicks and napkins on the floor, or imposing tyrannical smoking bans.

If the authorities refuse to take advantage of my brilliant suggestion to import boatloads of these chaps and give them their head, there is another, less exciting way. Could not the Carolinian and other restaurateurs, indeed American housewives, be shipped, manacled if necessary—culture is a cruel taskmaster—to Andalucia and Sicily on a learning holiday? Either way, what a combination could result: abundant and first-class American ingredients, American efficiency and order, charming Southern manners, with a touch of Mediterranean taste and tradition. Why, Ah'd move to the Holy City tomorrow. □

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BOOKS IN BRIEF

Sex, Death, and God in L.A., edited and with an introduction by David Reid (Pantheon, 354 pp., $23)

LOS ANGELES as the new Alexandria? David Reid sees the City of the Angels, which is increasingly a mecca for yearning throngs from five continents, as a modern mirror of the "crowded and cosmopolitan" megalopolis of antiquity: "global capital of science, scholarship, mass media, mystery religions, occultism, advanced sensuality, and avant-garde schools of asceticism." This book appeared before the riots, but the concept of Los Angeles as a capital of the age, a theater of ambition percolating with life and diversity, still carries force. But Reid's hopefulness isn't shared by all his essayists. Mike Davis, Alexander Cockburn, and Rubén Martínez see forbidding shadows downtown, where low-income housing is seized and demolished to make way for temples of finance (the writers don't make the connection and argue for reviving property rights, however). The dross at the end of some rainbows fascinates Lynell George, who writes of death in the city, including teen suicide among the rich. Jeremy Larner and David Thomson remind us of the ugliness—and lure—of The Industry. And Carolyn See tells how romantic involvements have carried her across ethnic boundaries—but the city's patchwork of cultures still leaves her with as much apprehension as hope. Was the same true for many in Alexandria as they struggled to claim the opportunities unique to their own era's international city? —HAROLD JOHNSON

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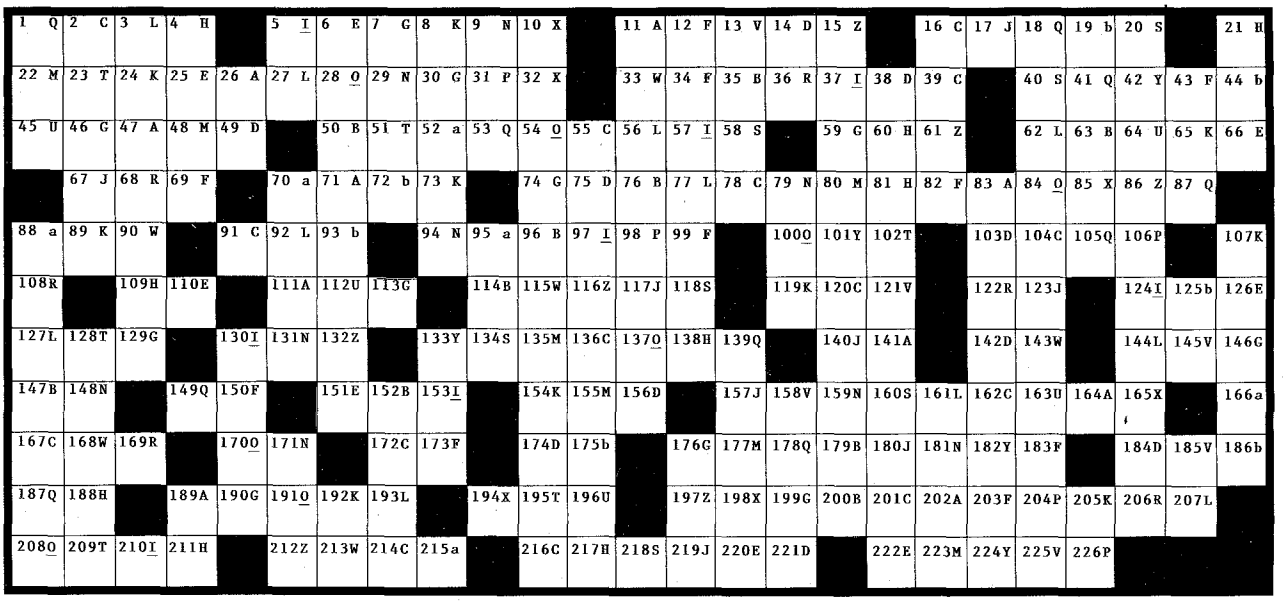
TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney



DEFINITIONS

A. Verbally bullied — 26 164 71 189 11 202 83 141 47 111

B. Relevant — 50 96 76 152 63 35 147 114 179 200

C. Straw-spinning dwarf of legend — 167 16 216 201 55 120 91 172 2 136 / 162 39 214 78 104

D. Muggsy and his gang (2 words) — 174 103 14 38 156 221 142 75 49 184

E. How Dukakis felt after the '88 election? — 151 126 222 6 66 220 110 25

F. Narcissus' preoccupation — 12 69 150 99 34 82 183 43 173 203

G. Trials and tribulations — 176 199 46 129 7 74 190 113 30 146 / 59

H. Fishing expedition, Salem-style (2 words) — 109 81 188 21 60 4 217 138 211

I. Pilot — 130 97 153 37 210 5 124 57

J. Far from polite — 140 117 219 180 157 123 17 67

K. Reached out and touched someone — 192 205 24 73 8 119 154 89 65 107

L. Steinway's number (hyph.) — 92 56 144 161 3 193 27 127 62 77 / 207

M. Pernicious — 22 135 223 80 177 155 48

N. River of interest to Saddam — 131 159 171 9 29 94 148 181 79

O. Staff officer — 54 137 208 170 191 28 100 84

P. Lyrical Irish name — 204 98 226 31 106

Q. The Bobbseys' favorite plant — 139 18 149 87 178 105 41 1 53 187

R. Greeting for Elsie (2 words) — 68 108 169 206 36 122

S. Soup variety (hyph.) — 118 160 58 20 218 134 40

T. Rutabaga — 102 209 128 195 23 51

U. MTV staple — 64 45 196 163 112

V. *Heart of the bone* — 185 158 145 121 13 225

W. Like Def. T, e.g. — 168 90 213 33 115 143

X. *Proverb* — 165 194 10 85 198 32

Y. Faint — 42 133 224 101 182

Z. *Airplane part* — 116 197 212 61 132 86 15

a. Line shot between two outfielders — 166 88 95 52 215 70

b. Grand — 175 93 186 72 44 19 125

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TO JED, our multi-talented, politically incorrect, and wonderful Dad. We love you! John, William, Betsy.

HAROLD ASHTON SR., I'm proud to say, is the most patient, loving father a son could ask for. I love you, Dad—Michael.

DEAR DADDY FORREST: Thanks for the car (in advance). Lisa.

TO AN UNDERSTANDING and caring father. Love, Tobie & George.

DEAR DABBY, I am in the Shouwer, sin Gini'' HFD! Love, Jeans.

DONALD A. WHITCOMB, you're the greatest dad and grampa! Happy Father's Day! Love, Faith, Amy, Joshua, Justin, and Andrew.

I LOVE YOU, Dad! Your Rare Gem.

TO THE MAN who inspired me in so many ways. Happy Father's Day. Love, Paul.

DAD: THOUGH we don't say it often enough, we love you very much, and wish you a Happy Father's Day. Vanessa, Karene, Nyree & Michelle.

DEAR DAD: Jimmy & I can't wait to visit you again for some more rawhide & dry heat. Happy Father's Day! Love, JXK Jr.

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY to a Dad I'll never be able to keep up with. Pedal away in VA!! Love, Terry.

JOSS AIKINS: For all the loving things you have done and continue to do, Happy Father's Day. Love from Marisa, Shelia & Tony.

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY to the only man in the world who is smarter and more conservative than WFB. Thanks for being my teacher, thanks for being my Daddy. I love you. (Czarina) Catherine.

Literary

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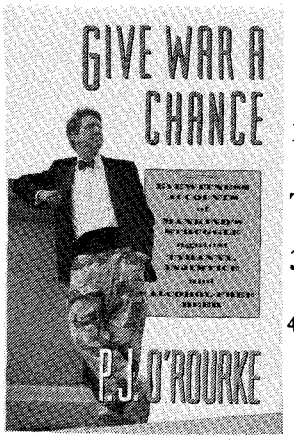

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LETTERS

(Continued from page 4)

ited myself to noting that people Lee Atwater normally confided to—his wife and two closest aides in the GOP—never heard Ann Stone's dramatic narrative until after Mr. Atwater's untimely death. My analysis was that this was "decidedly convenient." Mrs. Stone writes that her ex-husband can verify her story. I think this convenient too.

For the rest of the points, I ask only that the readers compare her letter with my story and judge for themselves. I ask Mrs. Stone to do the same, and I think she'll find I can say: Gotcha! —WMcG

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Being There With Ross Perot

NEW YORK, MAY 15

So Ross Perot has picked up the majority of Californians in a straw poll. Does this suggest that he is the most popular of the three candidates? I think not. It suggests consolidating dissatisfaction with two of the candidates. Mr. Perot's name has become a substitute for, "None of the Above."

What especially amuses is that Mr. Perot is right now appealing simultaneously to conservatives and to liberals. For the former, he is the kind of man who understands the bottom line, understands that we must not continue to spend more than we generate; understands that the culture of husbandry has got to get into the political world. The liberals like his rather undifferentiated concern for victims: for victims in the Vietnam War, for those there who were missing in action, for the hostages in Iran. And they like also the short temper he has displayed for political convention, his insistence that the job of the legislature is to get things done rather than to dribble its way through the balance of the century.

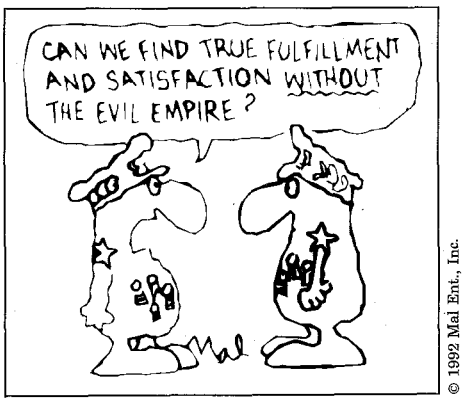
But the Fourth Law of Thermodynamics stipulates that conservatives and liberals cannot love the same object for very long. As things now stand people wonder whether, in the advent of a genuine candidacy, Perot would hurt Clinton or Bush more. The Bush people are more optimistic on this point than the Clinton people. They reason that so-called Reagan Democrats are currently adrift, and that their homing instincts will be interrupted by Ross Perot. Here they are, ready to give up on the post-Reagan Republican Party and return to the party of their ancestors: when en route home they notice this hospitable caravanserai, Perot's Retreat, and decide to check in there. The Bush people worry primarily about one state. How could Bush hope to prevail over Ross Perot in Texas, given that Perot is so distinctively Texan, while Mr. Bush is thought of as a substantial transient, but a transient nonetheless, who stopped in at Texas for 35 years en route from Connecticut to Maine.

Our guess is that the issue will never truly arise, the reason being that there is too great a similarity between Ross Perot and the Peter Sellers role in the movie *Being There*. It had a very short plot: A stranger materializes on the scene who is pre-advertised as a great oracle. He is accepted as that, and everything he says is transmitted as though it had been vouchsafed to the world at Mt. Sinai. So that when he says such things as, "When something drops, you know, it simply has to fall," people kill themselves running to the telegraph offices to circulate the news. Ross Perot will say: A company has to decide to make one product which will be the best product in the world, then make it, dammit, and succeed. . . . And people stare at him, as they would stare at the Oracle of Delphi, grateful for the liberating intelligence.

It isn't that Ross Perot isn't competent, but that there is some point in the political process. Anybody who struggles under democratic procedures is going to have fits of exasperation in which we dream of one term—just one term—with Caesar. Ross Perot has the Caesaristic appeal. He considers very decisive moves. Like suspending the right of Congress to pass money bills. Why didn't we think of that?

There is a lot of the baby-kissing aspect of political democracy that is abominable, indefensible, extravagant, humiliating, and stupid. And it's probably a very good idea for candidates to submit to that kind of thing. Even General de Gaulle every now and again felt the need, like Antaeus touching earth and being revived, to get out of his limousine and feed himself to an orgy of hand-clasping with the Frenchmen whom he despised as individuals, and loved as a race. That is why nobody in the United States who does not submit to such ordeals as New Hampshire ever makes it. If anyone might have in the past, it was General Douglas MacArthur. But his parade turned out to be short-lived. And when New Hampshire unexpectedly voted for Henry Cabot Lodge in absentia, it was simply telling us that it did not wish to take sides in the contest between Nelson Rockefeller and Barry Goldwater.

Mr. Perot got himself on the ballot in Maine last week as an independent, and with his backing, financial and popular, he will creep into the ballot of other states. But the notion that he stands any chance at all to become President is quite simply out of this world. Not out of Hollywood, but there is a difference between the two. □



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Help California?

NEW YORK, MAY 18

The big march on Washington was intended to marshal public opinion in behalf of our tatterdemalion cities. The spirit of the event merits applause, though it is thin on analysis. It is, just for instance, extremely hard to engender support from . . . out there . . . for New York City, given the extravagance of New York City life (31,000 extra city employees between 1985 and 1990).

But economic analysis stands in the way of the grand chimera of modern politics. It is, of course, that Washington, D.C., if only it had a heart, could transmit the money necessary, for instance, to remedy those awful tensions in South-Central Los Angeles. President Bush and Congress have played along with this romance by promising over $1 billion in aid to Los Angeles, where the self-inflicted damage is estimated at $775 million. What Mr. Bush will depend on is public ignorance. Public ignorance is the best friend of special pleaders.

Consider the City of Los Angeles in the framework of the revenue figures for 1988. The average per-capita income in the United States at that time was $16,444. What was the median income in California? Answer: $18,855. There is no reason to suppose that the relative standing of California has changed significantly since then. It has had bad times, but so has, well, New Hampshire.

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Assume, then, that the objective is to help restore Los Angeles—so that what we are talking about is: more money for Los Angeles.

But any money that flows through Washington en route to Los Angeles needs to come in from tax revenues—or from borrowing. If the Bush Administration intends to borrow in order to support Los Angeles, then the burden of the added debt falls on individual Americans scattered about the fifty states of the Union. But this means that the per-capita incidence of interest on the debt tends to fall a little more heavily on Californians than on others, because the median income there is higher. The direct way of paying for Los Angeles's problems, if we do not borrow to do so, is to allocate to Los Angeles a share of the pool of money accumulated by Washington through regular taxation.

But the tables for 1988 reveal that California, as the eighth most prosperous state in the Union, was remitting to Washington $1.20 for every $1 that Washington sent to California. So that any increase in federal aid to California, if that aid is to come through taxation, means that California's taxes are going to be raised by 20 per cent more than the value of the Washington dole. If, to use round figures, $1 billion goes to California, then Californians will have to send $1.2 billion to Washington.

Now if Californians are disposed to do this, the next question obviously is: Why? Why don't they raise $1 billion for Los Angeles, and skip the $200 million that Washington is going to keep to send, oh . . . elsewhere? Why should Californians rally for the purpose of using Washington as an instrumentality to dissipate California's reserves?

Consider the state of New York. It ranks sixth among the richest states in the Union. How can an advocate of aid for New York go with a straight face to Congress and ask for money, given that there are 44 states in the Union whose per-capita income is less than that of New York? Mr. Bush, if he were a pedagogue, might say this to the American public: "Look, if Mississippi, which is the poorest state in the Union, needs help, why I think we ought to help them, since their per-capita income is only $10,992. But it makes no sense for the wealthier states to ask for help, since any help they get is going to come out of their pockets. So I urge Sacramento to look at the problem of California, and go to work. But forget Washington. All that we could contribute is an extra burden on Californians."

Who will talk to us using this kind of language? Ross Perot? If so, he might have a chance after all. □

What Next in Korea?

SEOUL, MAY 27

About ten days ago a small detachment of North Korean soldiers made their way through the demilitarized zone that separates North from South Korea. Their mission presumably had something to do with the sophistication of the disguises that were found on them when they were detected and shot. The official reaction was, well, just like old times. Said the Communist spokesman for eighty-year-old Kim Il-sung, "The South Korean puppet government has committed a grave provocation seriously getting on our nerves by fabricating a false report after creating an incident." Aahh! That is how *Pravda* sounded, for about seventy years.

Although Kim Il-sung has said this & that about his willingness to submit to nuclear sweeps, somehow an effective date for an exploration never gets put on the calendar. This is a good reason for South Koreans to be nervous, given the record of the North. There was of course the rather blatant attempt to destroy the South, which resulted in a bloody war ending with the ceasefire of 1953. That was long ago, but every time Kim Il-sung gives off a conciliatory bleat, unpleasant things tend to happen. In 1972 a South–North dialogue got under way, during which it was discovered that the Communists were busily engaged in digging infiltration tunnels under the DMZ and boosting their armed forces by 200,000 men. In 1983, the Communists proposed talks, and just after that, they contrived the slaughter of half of the cabinet of South Korea by agents operating in Rangoon.

Still, there are those who believe the situation has really changed. For one thing, Kim Il-sung traveled recently to Peking, and there he was told by Deng Xiaoping that, let's face it, Kim, you had better do something about your deteriorating economic house. To reinforce his avuncular warning, Deng all but closed down those subsidies on which Kim lived for so many years. Given that North Korea had to do without Soviet help beginning two years ago, the situation there has got very grave, and there are those who say that Kim has to do—something.

What? Begin with this figure: North Korea, with its population of just over twenty million, is the most militarized power on earth. And General Robert RisCassi, the commander of our military in South Korea (technically, under the UN), has said publicly that he estimates the Communists will have a nuclear bomb one to three years from now.

What would the Korean–American military do in the South if they became convinced that such a bomb would materialize within—oh, six months?

It is obvious that northern Asia could not survive the materialization of a nuclearized North Korea. We would then be thinking in terms of a surgical strike. But wouldn't North Korea then retaliate? Yes, probably. What with? Well, they have, like Iraq, a lot of Scud missiles. How many civilians might they kill if such missiles were put to lethal use? Bear it in mind that Seoul is only fifty miles south of the DMZ, and there are ten million people living there. One hundred thousand casualties isn't a figure only an alarmist would cite. It is, in short, imperative both a) that North Korea not be tolerated as a nuclear power; and b) that its capacity to retaliate be reckoned with.

The mind wanders to related data. What kind of a life are North Koreans living? The answer is: about as wretched as any lives anywhere on earth. One thought of Albania as the model of a closed society, but in North Korea the radios are wired so that they can receive only local transmissions. No television from the South reaches North Korea. There is no telephonic communication, and no mail; defectors can't get across the DMZ, and they don't come in boats, so vigilant are the patrols. Students who had been sent to Eastern Europe no longer are permitted to circulate even within their own society. Austerity is extreme. One must suppose that enslaved people are unhappy, but unless we can be sure that they know what life is like elsewhere, it is never safe to suppose that they will not fight for the sadist who has ruled over them for so long.

What then is South Korea's policy?

Of obvious importance is the stability of the U.S. military presence. And the hard mobilization of pressures on Pyongyang to abandon any dream of taking over by nuclear muscle. Japan has said it is prepared to pay the North Koreans substantial reparations for its lengthy occupation. That is an enticement that could prove critical to a nation in rags, with only just enough muscle to pursue the evanescent dream of a nuclear power rising from the ashes of fifty years of Communist rule. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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An Eye on Racism

SO, what's old Gimlet Eye been up to while on leave of absence, huh? The Eye—did you expect something new?—has been running for his overamped life is what.

Get this set-up. I'm atop a subway staircase, right? The 97th Street IND downtown platform is 15 or 16 steps below. I'm dressed well (for me): third best trousers, tie, tweed jacket hung over one shoulder. Off to meet the wife for dinner. But then, instinctively, I pull up short.

There's a black man lounging on the bottom step.

A presentable black man, mind you: thirty or so, just under six foot, trim, in blue track suit and store-white Adidas sneaks. But I'm from New York—a certain coyness about his lounging strikes me as overarticulated. Why has he holed up in this blind stairway niche? Still, I can't turn on him and go back now. Mr. Adidas has seen me. Going back would be an uncivil act. So I head on down. But I head down wary and I head down *fast*.

Bingo. As I hit the last step, Mr. A rises, uncoiling like a pit viper. This, dear reader, is sign-off time. He has a six-inch knife blade at my gut and one arm set to pin me against the staircase wall. But not for long. Mr. A, thank Christ, has misjudged my velocity and weight.

I have momentum—besides, I half expected this. I jostle his knife hand with my elbow, shrug through, take one giant stride or so across the platform and—*arrivederci, sayonara, bon soir*—jump down onto the goddam tracks.

Adrenaline is a focusing high. This was my first decent athletic move since maybe 1973. I leap outward, make a mid-air half-pivot, and dismount—squoosh—in turgid sludge between the rails. Well, Mr. Adidas is *indignant*. The guy works 9 to 5 and, hey, he doesn't need a hang-up like this. There he is, four feet above me, stroking his six-incher almost sensually. "I'm gonna come down and cut you, motherf---er," Mr. A says. A real vasoconstrictor that, lemme tell you. I can't run: I've got sockless, sewage-filled topsiders on. I have no weapon. I'm scared bladderless, I'm dead.

What to do? What to do is let all that adrenaline replace fear with crazy jive. "You're not cutting me," I yell back. "This is New York, you get one shot, f---face. One shot. Go complain to Dinkins. You missed me. Mug somebody else." And I think: That did it, wheel the gurney in. Mr. A is flexing to hop down—then he sees the brown swill around my feet. No way is he gonna befoul his new white high-tops. I am saved by fastidiousness.

At just that moment an elderly woman appears. Afraid for her now, I shout, "Mugger! Go back!" Mr. A has begun to get antsy: as a time-labor problem this theft is inefficient. He turns. I take off for the 96th Street platform entrance, scuffing putrid bilge along. There, with no help whatever from bystanders, I haul myself up. I stumble to the token booth, and . . . and—*a black arm has grabbed me around the waist from behind.*

It was one of those, you know, *cinematic* moments. My heart woulda broke an EKG machine. But this is not Mr. A's accomplice. This is a transit cop disguised as some kind of track worker. Why does he have his bridge cable taut arm around my waist? Why has he begun frog marching me with inexorable politeness back toward 97th Street? Because, in New York, it is harder to catch the complainant than it is the perpetrator.

"Man," the cop says, "You are crazy, jumping like that. A train coulda hit you."

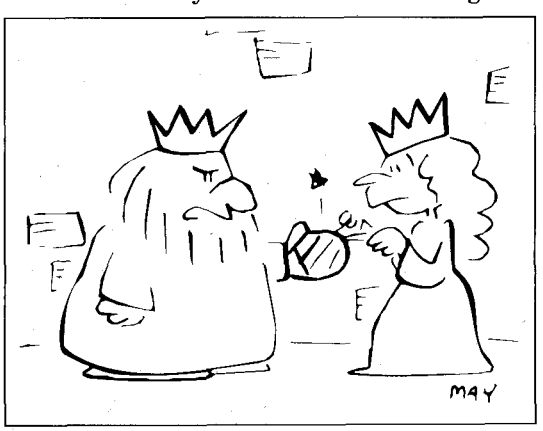
"Not with the lousy service we get," I say. "And you can stop dragging me, I'll go quietly."

To make a long story fit this page, Mr. A lay handcuffed and face down at 97th Street. I would've been his eighth or ninth knife-point victim on that platform. But two transit cops had the station staked out. They saw me leap trackward on a TV screen at 96th Street. During my hyper-macho shout session, one cop ran from 96th to 97th aboveground and apprehended Mr. A. The other cop apprehended me. Mr. A is doing 7 to 15. I was late for dinner with my wife.

THINGS BROKE real lucky that night—believe me, I know it. But there was more than blind good fortune involved. There was also racial prejudice. I discriminated against Mr. A—it would be hypocritical to pretend otherwise. If you define racism as an action taken on the basis of religion or skin color, then—for that moment, atop that staircase—I was a racist. Yes, Mr. A's coyness and his position on the lower step made me suspicious. But, had he been white, I would've gone down in my usual unalert and leisurely manner.

Racism—I write this with sadness—is not always just an illogical, detached, and cruel attitude deriving from callous hate. Racism and hate have their genesis in fear. When that fear is irrational or unexamined—the result of Nazi propaganda against Jews, say—then a racist must be held accountable. But, if self-defense can absolve murder, then surely it can absolve racism—*insofar as a person's life is at risk.* I listen to my police scanner every night. I know the crime statistics. We all do. I think it is to my credit that I went down the staircase at all. I was too civil. I was, in fact, a reckless fool. Next time I won't be so polite—no matter whose feelings are hurt—because I'm fifty and too old to jump for my life any more.

—D. KEITH MANO



"That's the last time I *feed a peasant!"*

Mr. Mano is the author of Topless.

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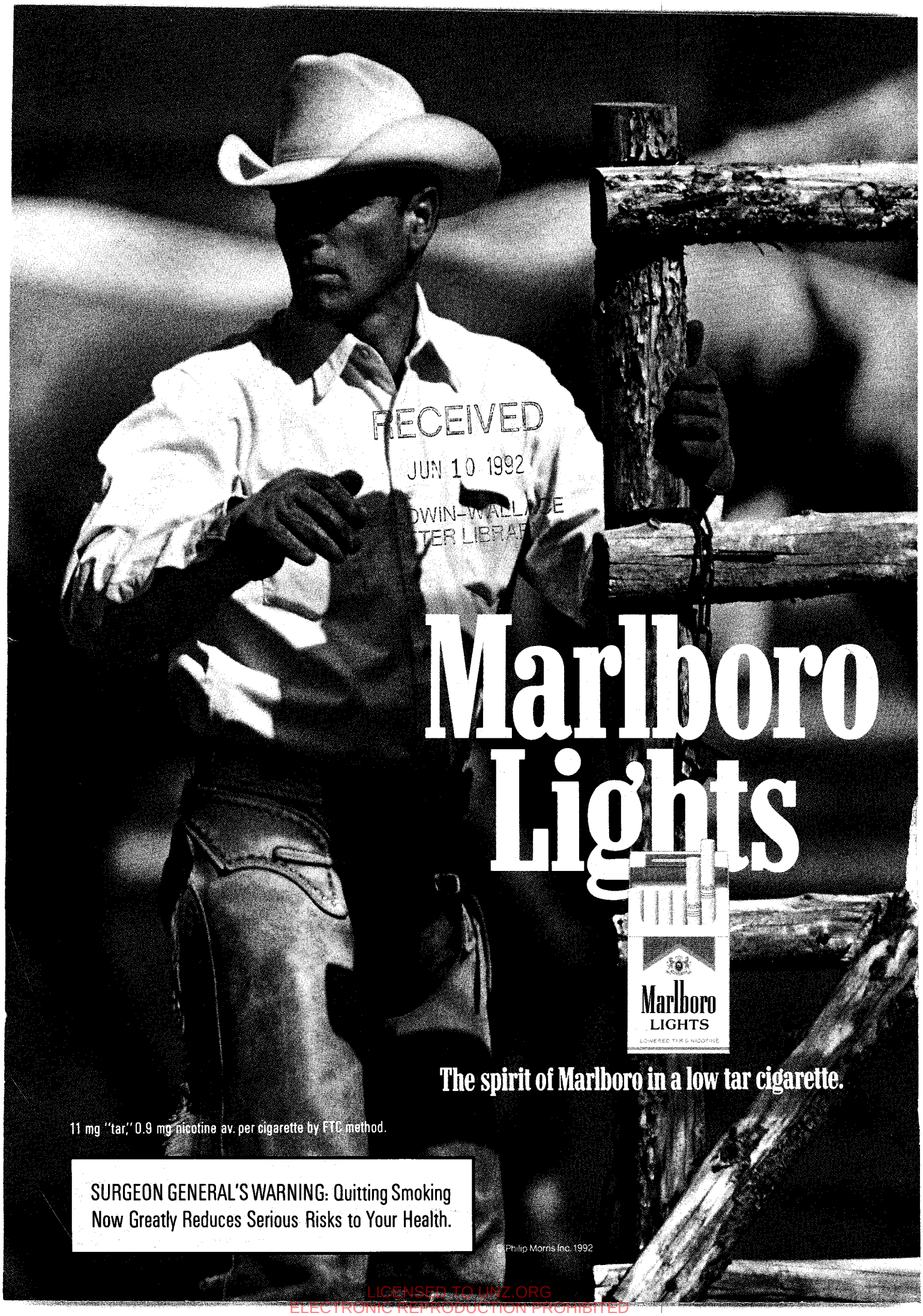
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